

RITUAL, HERITAGE AND POWER
❧ IN CONTEMPORARY JAVA ❧

The *Pasamuan Ageng* and *Pusaka* of Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat

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Fresh flowers would be placed at the open courtyard facing the *Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso* where the *pusaka* (sacred heirlooms) would be kept. Occasionally, *abdidalem* (courtiers) would meditate in prayer here facing the *Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso*. These floral 'offerings', usually made up of petals from the red, pink and white roses, and jasmines have been a standard feature of the rituals conducted at the Keraton Surakarta. Here, I place these flowers as an adornment to the thesis that follows, in replication of a Javanese *keraton* practice.

For my *sayang*,
Roslinda,
daughters,
Nur Tiara, Kamelia Tufah & Karima Nasha;
mother,
Sity Saleh;
&
in-laws,
Sahamad Dollah and Amnah Ishak...



*In the name of Allah,
the compassionate, the benevolent
All praise is for Allah,
the Lord of the Universe
The Most Merciful and Most Kind,
Master of the Day of Judgement.
Ye alone we worship, from You alone we seek help
Guide us along the straight path
The way of those whom You have favoured
And not those who earn Your wrath,
nor of those who go astray.*

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*I am many things to many people,
but nothing to myself.*

This thesis can be read and perceived in many ways and through the lens of various disciplines. Regardless of how this thesis will be read and understood, the fact remains that this thesis will be a reflection of my involvement with the topic and the extensive interactions that I have had with numerous people, in several places and over a period of three years.

I am indebted to several people, places and institutions for their contribution to this tiring and gratifying endeavour. I started this journey with the hope of re-discovering myself as I move from one phase of life to another. I reached the crossroads upon the completion of this thesis, knowing more people and discovering a new lease of life.

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Towards the completion of this thesis, my interest and motivation has been sustained by the readiness of NUS Museum to host an exhibition based on an excerpt of this thesis. The exhibition, "Ritual, Heritage and Power in Contemporary Java" was held from 5 July to 22 September 2006 at the NUS Museum NX Gallery. This arrangement would not have been possible without the offer by Mr. Kwa Chong Guan; the support from Ms Christine Khor (Director for the NUS Centre for the Arts); and the extensive facilitation and assistance from Ms. Foo Su Ling as well as all staff from the NUS Museum.

The main actors and stage for the performance which manifests itself as this thesis are several thousand kilometres southeast of Singapore, in the hearth of Javanese culture- Surakarta. Surakarta is the pre-Indonesian domain of the 'ke-ratu-an' (keraton) ruled by descendents of Susuhunan Paku Buwono II and Panembahan Senopati, the founder of the Second Mataram dynasty in the sixteenth century. Within this world within a world, I am indebted to *Kangjeng Pangeran Haryo* (KPH) Eddy Wirabhumi who paved the way for my entry into the domain of the keraton; *Gusti Pangeran Haryo* (GPH) Puger, the custodian of knowledge on all aspects of Javanese keraton culture; the staff of the administrative office of the *Yayasan Pawiyatan Kabudayan Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat* (Royal Cultural Foundation of Surakarta) mediated through Mbak Yemmy Triana and my counsel, Mbak Yetty.

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*These people are everything to me,
and everything that I am is them.*

Suryakenchana Omar
December 2006

Sang Surya Kencanawungu
Besar 1939

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SUMMARY

This thesis could be a story of how Keraton Surakarta which was established in the 18th Century continued to remain relevant and significant in contemporary Java.

This thesis began with the idea that the performance of royal rituals known as the *Pasamuan Ageng* at the *keraton* might have provided a platform for the Susuhunan (king) and the aristocracy to sustain their relevance and significance.

In addition, the designation of the keraton as a 'cultural centre' in 1988 has provided them opportunities to be relevant by being custodians and promoters of Javanese and Indonesian national heritage. Their significant role in the preservation of cultural heritage has been partly possible due to the idea of *pusaka* that prevailed in contemporary Java.

Pusaka are sacred artefacts and the idea of *pusaka* could be an indigenous form of cultural heritage preservation as it provided the motivation for the preservation of artefacts that have been consecrated as *pusaka*. In the Javanese conception, *pusaka* are believed to be "alive" and possessing the 'power' to protect or harm, depending on the intentions of their patrons.

The keraton possessed a collection of *pusaka* which has been considered the most sacred; and these *pusaka* are prominent components of every royal ritual. Beyond providing a sense of historical continuity and legitimacy, these artefacts represented the *keraton's* reservoir of mystical powers. Together with rituals, the idea of *pusaka* provided an effective strategy for the preservation of cultural heritage.

In order to appreciate the Javanese idea of *pusaka*, it would be necessary to correspondingly appreciate the Javanese idea of power. In a Javanese perspective, 'power' can be "concrete, homogeneous, constant in

total quantity and without inherent moral implications". In these perspectives, it would have been necessary for the Susuhunan and the *keraton* to have possessed 'power' in order to conduct the royal rituals and manage their collection of *pusaka*.

The motivations behind the revival and continuity of royal rituals and the preservation of *pusaka* could be the need to espouse the idealised concept of *kawula-gusti* (servant-master), to maintain *toto tentrem* (cosmic harmony) and to maintain world peace and stability (*memayu hayuning buwana*). It could also be for the pragmatic reasons of sustaining the *keraton*'s relevance and significance.

My observations and findings would show that the *keraton* could possibly be an example of a "theatre state" given the prevalence of the Javanese ideas of power and *pusaka*. However, such a perspective would be contingent on the ways in which the relationship between ritual, heritage and power could be perceived.

(416 words)

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*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Say,
"Allah is One, the Eternal God.
He begot none, nor was He begotten.
None is equal to Him."*

*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Say,
"Allah is One, the Eternal God.
He begot none, nor was He begotten.
None is equal to Him."*

*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Say,
"Allah is One, the Eternal God.
He begot none, nor was He begotten.
None is equal to Him."*

(Surah Al-Ikhlās)

The recitation of the *Surah Al-Ikhlās* (Oneness) three times consecutively has been said to be equivalent to reciting the entire Al-Quran.

INTRODUCTION



Figure 1

Parangtritis at the southern coast of Yogyakarta. This is the beach believed to be the gateway into the realm of the underwater kingdom of the South Seas.

Somewhere on the southern coast of sixteenth century Java (Fig. 1), Panembahan Senopati had just completed a crash course on kingship – “the secrets of authority over both human and spirit realms” (Florida, 1992:23) – in the underwater kingdom of Ratu Kidul, Queen of the South Seas. Within a span of a few days underwater, Panembahan Senapati (r. 1585-1601) married Ratu Kidul and secured a strategic alliance for his kingdom which has yet to be formed. The alliance ensured that the supernatural forces and resources of the underwater kingdom would be mobilised to support Panembahan

Senapati's armies in battle. Considering that the immortal Ratu Kidul would outlive Panembahan Senapati, the alliance would be eternal and hereditary such that every king after him would be bounded by the terms of the alliance. In exchange, Ratu Kidul would be the eternal Queen of the Senapati's new kingdom and she would have the prerogative to recruit anyone she desired to be part of her underwater realm. Henceforth, every Mataram king after Panembahan Senapati had acknowledged this alliance.¹

Part of this acknowledgement has been manifested in the form of a dance since the reign of Sultan Agung in the seventeenth century (Florida, 1992:24; Nusjirwan, 1967:32).² Today, this dance is performed regularly in Keraton Surakarta – a descendent of the Mataram that was established by Panembahan Senapati.³ Considered as sacred, this dance – the *Bedhaya*

¹ The story can be found in *Babad Tanah Jawi*. This brief account about the founding of Mataram has been based on interpretations of the manuscript as well as oral versions. Refer to the following for details about the story in Brakel-Papenhuijzen (1992); Florida (1992); Ricklefs (1998:9-13); Purwadi (2004:86-93); and Miksic & Heins (Ed.) (2004:297-298).

Interestingly, the Asia Paranormal Investigators (API) has included a feature on Ratu Kidul as part of their "Paranormal Indonesia" topic on their website – www.moblog.com.sg/blog/api.

²The *labuhan* ritual would be another way in which the Susuhunan's relationship with Ratu Kidul has been commemorated. For more information about the *labuhan*, refer to Miksic & Heins (Ed.) (2004:314-5).

³ Several accounts about the *bedhaya* provided some sense of continuity about its performance in the *keraton*. According to Jan Hostetler, "Bedhaya Semang: The Sacred Dance of Yogyakarta", *Archipel* 24 (1982):127-142, as cited in Florida (1992), there was a hiatus between the split of Mataram to the fire of 1985 at Keraton Surakarta. Refer to Brakel-Papenhuijzen (1992:4) and Ricklefs (1998: 6-9) for accounts of visits by VOC officers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Refer to the following for more information about the *bedhaya*: Nusjirwan (1967); Brakel-Papenhuijzen (1992); Djandjang (2004); and Florida (1992).

Ketawang – will be staged every thirty-five days on a Tuesday-*Kliwon*⁴; and during *Tingalan Dalem Jumenengan* – the annual ritual commemorating the king's accession. In 2004, this dance was performed at Keraton Surakarta to commemorate the accession of a new king – Pakubuwana XIII (PB-XIII) (r. 2004-). This event was interesting considering that by 2004, Surakarta no longer existed as a sovereign kingdom and its territories had been subsumed under the Republic of Indonesia, which was established in 1945.



Figure 2

Entrance to the inner complex of the palace at Surakarta. The tower in the background is the Panggung Songo Buwono, where it is believed that the Susuhunan (king) of Surakarta will meet Ratu Kidul.

This thesis would partly be a story about a *keraton* that continued to prevail despite several threats to its existence and had shown perseverance in recent years with efforts at rejuvenation and sustaining its significance and relevance to contemporary Javanese society. Perhaps, the assertion by *Kyahi*

⁴ In the Javanese sense of time, the seven-day week (*wuku*) has been superimposed with the five-day week (*pasar*). The five pasaran days are *Pahing*, *Kliwon*, *Pon*, *Legi* and *Wage*. This superimposition result in 35 combinations of days. (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:286-291)

Bathang would prevail – that the *keraton* at Surakarta would not perish (Sri Juari, 2002).

One of the ways in which the *keraton* at Surakarta (Keraton Surakarta) attempted to maintain their relevance and influence in contemporary Java has been through the conduct of rituals of royalty, or royal rituals, as suggested by Ari Dwipayana (2004) in *Bangsawan dan Kuasa* (Aristocracy and Power). When this thesis was written, there were at least three royal rituals held annually that received public attention. Given that the king at Surakarta no longer possessed any political power, what was the purpose of asserting his kingship through such rituals?

This question led to the reading of Clifford Geertz's (1980) *Theatre State* and Eric Hobsbawm's (1983) "Inventing Traditions". Geertz (1980:13) argued that Balinese kings accumulated power so that they could conduct their rituals – i.e. "[p]ower served pomp, not pomp power"; while Hobsbawm (1983) asserted that rituals of royalty tend to establish some form of continuity from the past for the purpose of reifying the position of the aristocracy. In directly, Hobsbawm (1983) seemed to support the idea that 'pomp' served 'power'.

These two perspectives became a starting reference for two reasons. Firstly, Geertz's discussion about the "theatre state" was applied to Java in *In Islam Observed*, where he explained briefly about the "Doctrine of the Theatre State" of a Javanese kingdom. According to Geertz (1968:36-39), The

“Doctrine of Theatre State” referred to the “concrete realisation” of two other doctrines – “The Doctrine of the Exemplary Centre” and “The Doctrine of Graded Spirituality” – by means of ritual life.⁵ Given that Keraton Surakarta no longer possessed political power, why were they able to conduct such rituals? In an alternate perspective, could there be other forms of power that were related to the conduct of such rituals? These questions provided the trigger for an inquiry into the idea(s) of power in Java and its relationship with the conduct of royal rituals.

Secondly, one of the rituals conducted by Keraton Surakarta has been the *Kirab Pusaka* or the ‘circumambulation of sacred artefacts’. This ritual was influenced by earlier forms of royal rituals, but it was a relatively recent introduction. The *Kirab Pusaka* was introduced in the 1970s at the request of the then President of Indonesia, Suharto, for the purpose of bringing peace and prosperity to Indonesia (Bram *et al.*, 2001:259-260; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:11). The case of *Kirab Pusaka* seemed to support Hobsbawm’s idea that traditions could be invented for specific purposes – particularly in reifying the power of the aristocracy.

⁵ The *Doctrine of the Exemplary Centre* rests on the idea that the king and his court reflect the “image of divine order” and the “paradigm of social order”, in which everyone in the kingdom – i.e. the *rakyat* – aspires towards. Hence, the *keraton* (with the king at the axis) is the example of the “microcosmic representation of macrocosmic form” – the exemplary centre (*Ibid*:36-37). This doctrine with the king at the centre is complemented by the *Doctrine of Graded Spirituality* which informs of the ‘natural’ inequality that resulted in the king being “the paramount sacred object” (*Ibid*:37) and therefore magnifying his charisma.

RELEVANCE OF THE ARISTOCRACY

In investigating the relevance of the aristocracy in Indonesia, it was interesting to note Leifer's (2001:xi) comment in his Foreword to Michael Kershaw's (2001) *Monarchy in Southeast Asia*:

It is conventional wisdom that monarchy has become a political anomaly. In the case of Southeast Asia, this axiom is valid only up to a point... Moreover in its absence, the tradition of monarchy infuses political culture in Indonesia, especially in Java.

(Leifer, 2001:xi)

It was interesting that Leifer (2001:xi) made special reference to the tradition of monarchy in Java and its influences in Indonesian political culture. Kershaw (2001:3-4) opined that the advent of modernity has been said to have made kings and the aristocracies obsolete. Yet, there have been more than a thousand royal institutions in the world.⁶ In Indonesia alone, the website, *Royal Ark*, listed 182 possible royal institutions.⁷

In Southeast Asia, monarchies (absolute or constitutional) continue to exist in Brunei, Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand. Recently in June 2005, a Paramount Sultan of Sulu in the Philippines was crowned amidst much opposition.⁸ Although these monarchies have been considered by Leifer

⁶ For information about royalty in the world, visit *The World of Royalty* (<http://www.royalty.nu/>) and the corresponding blog - *World of Royalty Blog* (<http://worldofroyalty.typepad.com/>).

⁷ The figure of 182 was derived from counting the number of kingdoms being listed at *Royal Ark*. Out of this 182 listings, 25 of them have active links with information such as a brief history and genealogical records. (<http://www.4dw.net/royalark/Indonesia/indon.htm>)

⁸ In March 2005, there was news of the "Paramount Sultan of Sulu", Datu Der. Ibrahim Bahjin (Shakirullah II) and the impending coronation of Datu Amir Baraguir, as the 25th Sultan of Maguindanao on 8 June 2005. However, it was reported that Datu Amir was enthroned in December 2005 as Seri Paduka Sultan Sayyid Hadji Datu Amir bin Muhammad Baraguir.

(2001:xi) as “political anomal[ies]”, the aristocracies remained as a members of contemporary Southeast Asian societies, and continue to be an influential ‘big family’ at the very least.⁹

Recent trends among the aristocracies in Southeast Asia pointed towards a process of reorganisation and reconsolidation of their power.¹⁰ Their presence in political elections showed that democracy has not made the aristocracies obsolete. Instead, it has provided the aristocracies and their royal institutions with new means of consolidating their power.

Sadly, Sultan Amir was murdered on 11 January 2006. It was speculated that he was either murdered due to his proposal for a “United Nations-sponsored ‘decolonization of Maguindanao and Sulu’ and the conversion of these provinces into two separate nations”; or due to a power struggle within the aristocracy. (Donald Tick, personal email: 5 Mar 2005; *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 14 Jan 2006; *Sun Star Network Online*, 15 Jan 2006)

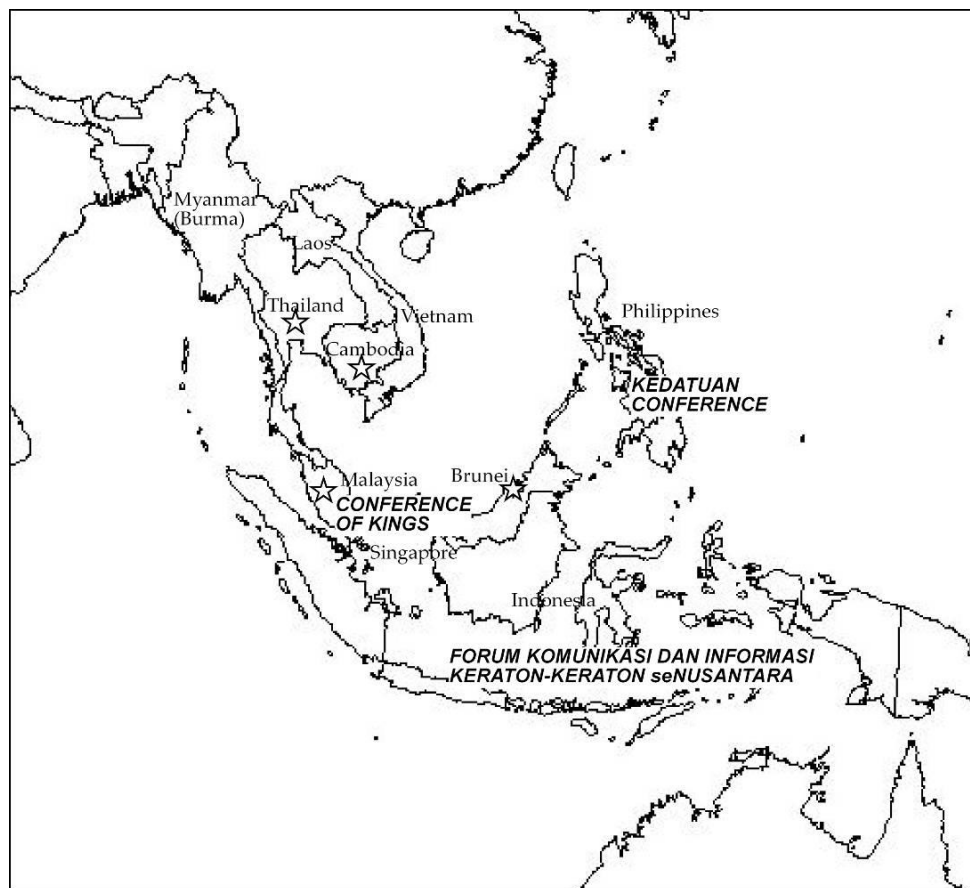
⁹ Compare with Bowring (2006), “Monarchs sitting and waiting”.

¹⁰ This trend could be discerned from developments related to the monarchies in Southeast Asia in recent years. On 27 July 2004 at the Raffles Hotel in Singapore, the Crown Prince of Perak, Raja Nazrin Shah (2004) assured attendees that “the [Malaysian] Monarchy evolves, recreates and constantly redefines itself in tandem with the progress of society as a whole”; that “[t]he nine Rulers are not made up of the uninformed... include a former chief justice, a former ambassador...a former officer in the armed forces, magistrates and public administrators”; and “[t]he final overriding claim I would make is that well within the spirit of the Constitution, we have helped nurture a harmonious society where citizens of various ethnic groups can live comfortably side by side”. These statements reflected the desire for the monarchy to play an active role in the progress of Malaysia.

In 2005, the Sultan of Brunei was conferred an honorary degree by the National University of Singapore for being “...a true king to his people... [and] his broad goals and far-sighted policies have also ensured that Brunei has attained an admirable degree of progress and prosperity” (*NUS Knowledge Enterprise Online*, 4/7, Feb 2005). In addition, the coronation of Cambodian King in October 2004 received much publicity and the new Cambodian King, Norodom Sihamoni said, “I swear to follow the constitution and other laws of the kingdom of Cambodia so as to serve the interests of the nation and the people.” (*BBC News UK Edition*)

Beyond these publicity events, the existence of the Kedatuan Conference in the Philippines and the *Forum Komunikasi dan Informasi Keraton-keraton se-Nusantara* (FKIKN, Forum for the Communication and Information of Nusantara Kingdoms) in Indonesia suggested some form of emerging groupings of the aristocracies aligned with national boundaries. A recent article by Bowring (2006) speculated on the possible role of monarchies and the aristocracies in Asia.

In Indonesia, Sultan Hamengkubuwana X (HB-X) (r. 1988-) has had the benefit of a concurrent appointment as Governor of the Special Province of Yogyakarta (*Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta*), while other kings in this Republic maintained vestiges of their power within the walls of their palace complexes and in their royal rituals.¹¹



Map 1
Location of network of aristocracies in Southeast Asia.

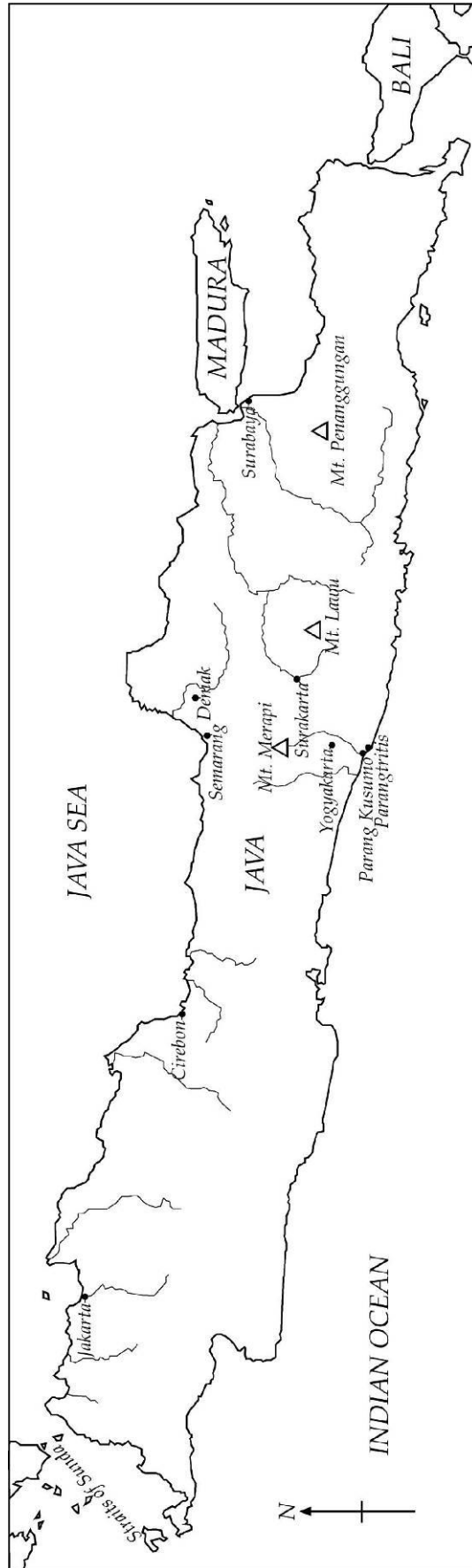
¹¹ When the Japanese surrendered and the Declaration of Independence was made in 1945, the king of Yogyakarta, HB-IX “had both the opportunity to relaise his hopes for change... and the means to do so” (Ricklefs, 1993:219). He supported the revolution and Yogyakarta became the capital of the new Republic in 1946. Since 1945, the territories of the kingdom of Kasultanan Ngayogyakarta were designated as a Special Province (*Daerah Istimewa*). One of the significant constitutional provisions of this designation has been the automatic appointment of the Sultan of Yogyakarta as *Gubernur* (Governor) and the Prince of Paku Alam as *Wakil Gubernur* (Deputy Governor). Following independence in 1945, HB-IX became the Governor. In 1988, when HB-IX died, HB-X had to face challenges from the Suharto government, who established the need for elections in the local assembly. As the only candidate, HB-X became the Governor. (Ong, 2003:19-24)

Pakubuwana XII (PB-XII) (r. 1944-2004) of Surakarta was one of those kings who surrendered their territories to form the Republic of Indonesia. While some considered PB-XII's lack of support for the Indonesian revolution as a cause for his failure to secure a similar status of 'Special Province', Bram, *et al* (2001) presented an alternative account of that historical period to argue for the attainment of such similar status, which Surakarta has yet to attain.¹²

As Geertz (1980:3-4) noted, Indonesia seemed to have lost one of its "most important" institutions which shaped the "basic character of Indonesian civilisation" – the *negara*. According to Geertz (1980), '*negara*' would refer to more than its original Sanskrit meaning of a "town" or its used in the Indonesian language interchangeably as "palace", "capital", "state", "realm" or "town". *Negara* has been the word used for "(classical) civilisation, for the world of the traditional city, the high culture the city supported and the system of superordinate political authority centred there" (Geertz, 1980:4). It was within this *negara* that royal rituals were assessed as being the purpose for attaining power ('power served pomp'). In contrast, Hobsbawm's (1983) notion of "invented traditions" suggested the idea that royal rituals served to enhance the power of the aristocracy – 'pomp served power'.

¹² Ricklefs (1993:223) considered PB-XII as a "feckless ruler ...[who] showed few of the skills of their opposite numbers in Yogyakarta... They fumbled opportunities to play a positive role in the revolution and thus never gained control of events".

At this point, my thesis seems to be about the debate on the relationship between 'pomp' (as provided by the royal rituals) and 'power'. Based on my initial observations, my hypothesis would be that the aristocracy of Keraton Surakarta has used royal rituals as a platform to extend their influence and remain relevant in contemporary Java. However, my preliminary research into the idea of *pusaka* (as sacred artefacts) showed that the relationship between ritual and power can be further explored by considering the prevalence of some form of *pusaka* in all the royal rituals. The sacred *Bedhaya Ketawang* dance mentioned above has been performed for one of the annual rituals. Other *pusaka* used for some of the rituals included a rice steamer, spears, herd of albino buffaloes or carriages. While '*pusaka*' has been translated as 'sacred artefacts' so far, it can also be translated as 'heirlooms' or 'heritage' because such artefacts tend to be inherited, or passed from one generation to another. These *pusaka* provided a sense of historical continuity, legitimacy and represented the *keraton's* reservoir of mystical powers. In addition, the sacred artefacts and the royal rituals can be considered as part of Javanese (and Indonesian) cultural heritage.



Map 2
Location of Surakarta and Yogyakarta.

THE KERATON AS 'CULTURAL CENTRE'

Since the late 1970s, a number of *keraton* have been transformed into 'living museums' as part of Suharto's extensive cultural mapping project (Pemberton, 1994:12-13,166). This trend probably culminated in 1985 when President Suharto finally managed to include Keraton Surakarta in his project when fire destroyed major buildings of the palace.¹³ The palace at Surakarta was rebuilt and later institutionalised as a national cultural heritage centre in 1988 with the official document, *Kepres* ("Keputusan Presiden" or President's Decision)¹⁴ No.23/88. When the decision to rebuild the palace in 1985 was made, there were sceptics who doubted the Keraton Surakarta's contemporary significance in Javanese society.¹⁵ When Pemberton (1994) mentioned that the *keraton* began to revive "palace customs" in 1970 with the hosting of a lavish wedding ceremony of PB-XII's eldest daughter, it would be difficult to determine the state of their annual royal rituals given such a 'snapshot'.¹⁶ However, the introduction of *Kirab Pusaka* in 1974 could

¹³ In 1968, the *keraton* resisted offers by New Order officials to convert the Keraton Surakarta into a "national monument" (Pemberton, 1994:166).

¹⁴ *Keputusan Presiden* (President's Decision).

¹⁵ In 1985, two cultural observers – Sardono W Kusumo and Suprpto Suryodarmo-, opined that Keraton Surakarta could no longer be considered as a 'cultural centre'. According to Sardono, the *keraton* had been neglected by the people and has been regarded more as a museum and tourist attraction. On the other hand, Suprpto felt that there were still sentiments about the *keraton* and that the loss was shared by most Javanese. Both observers felt that it would take considerable effort and resources to rebuild the *keraton*. While the physical infrastructures could be replicated and rebuilt easily, it would take much longer to rebuild the essence of the *keraton*. After all, the *keraton* was developed over 240 years. (*Kompas*, 12 Feb 1985)

¹⁶ The depletion of resources following the surrender of territories to the newly formed Republic of Indonesia; and the support given to the revolution might have been the cause for

represent the revival of such rituals. When I participated in the *Kirab Pusaka* held in the late 1980s, the *keraton* did not seem to have lost much of its pageantry or lavishness.

In my observation of the royal rituals at the *keraton* in 2004 and 2005, Kepres No.23/88 might have provided the *keraton* with an institutionalised platform to remain relevant in contemporary Java. As 'cultural centres', the *keraton* would have the prerogative to gain economically from the promotion of cultural and heritage tourism, as well as funding from the central and local government under the aegis of tourism development (Ari, 2004:128).¹⁷ Part of the *keraton's* 'attraction' as a cultural centre has been the annual royal rituals known as the *Pasamuan Ageng* (Grand Gatherings) which would henceforth be referred to as '*keraton* rituals'.

In this perspective, the conduct of *keraton* rituals for 'tourist attraction' could simply be pragmatic means for economic sustenance.¹⁸ The possession of sacred artefacts and other cultural heritage that could be considered as 'national cultural heritage' would make the *keraton* a viable 'cultural centre' and relevant in contemporary Indonesia. Hence, the *keraton's* heritage, in

the dismal state of Keraton up to the 1970s. Compare this account with that of Ricklefs (1993:223) which stated that PB-XII "fumbled opportunities to play a positive role in the revolution". Bram, et al (2001) reported that the *Pawiyatan Kadudayan Keraton Surakarta* established in 1953 to promote the arts had to be disbanded in 1973 due to a lack of funding. Ironically, Pemberton (1994:161) reported that

¹⁷ In Indonesia, the management of culture with tourism under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism - as opposed to the earlier set-up in which culture was managed with education - suggests a close relationship between the promotion of culture and tourism. Internationally, cultural tourism had been popular and cultural resources have become commodities that are 'traded' in the tourism industry.

¹⁸ Compare with Ari (2004:134).

terms of both its sacred artefacts and rituals, had provided some means for sustaining its relevance. Given this perspective, the relationship of ritual and power specific to the case of Keraton Surakarta can only be appreciated with an understanding of how its heritage – sacred artefacts and the idea of *pusaka* – affected that relationship.

Coincidentally, my fieldwork in 2004 and 2005 allowed me to observe the conduct of *keraton* rituals and ceremonies in various political contexts. In 2004, the royal funeral of PB-XII and the coronation ceremony of PB-XIII preceded and coincided with the elections of the Indonesian President, the National Parliament (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*, DPR) and the Provincial Parliament (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah*, DPRD) respectively. In 2005, the *Garebeg Mulud* coincided with the elections of the *Walikota* (Mayor) for Solo city. These political events provided some clues on how the *keraton* projected its political affiliations and involvement.

REVIVAL OF THE ARISTOCRACY

Although Indonesia has been a democratic republic with no constitutional provisions for monarchies or the aristocracies, there seems to be reasons for becoming a king. In the past decade, post-Suharto (post-1998) Indonesia has embarked on a phase of political de-centralisation and a strong wave of democratisation, which saw the establishment of elected local governments. This de-centralisation project in Indonesia became a positive

development for the various *keraton* as they will be able to re-consolidate their political positions through participation in local politics and leveraging on their traditional charisma (van Klinken, 2006; Ari, 2004:8; Tick, 2004).

In addition to such political involvement, Van Klinken (2006) and Tick (2004) observed that there has been a trend towards the revival of royal institutions and the re-instatement of kings. Such a trend can be reflected by the increasing number of representatives participating in the *Festival Keraton Nusantara* (FKN, Nusantara Keraton Festival). In September 2004, about forty-five kings and their entourages participated in the fourth FKN (FKN-IV) hosted by the *keraton* at Yogyakarta – the Kasultanan Ngayogyakarta Hadiningrat (KR, 26 Sep 2004). In 2002, the Karajaan Kutai hosted 34 kings in the same franchise. In 1997, only 24 ‘kingdoms’ were represented (van Klinken, 2004:26). The increasing number of ‘kings’ participating in the FKN indicated a trend towards the revival of the aristocracies in Indonesia.¹⁹

In situations where the re-instatement of a king could stir a negative reaction among the populace, a *Kepala Adat* or Cultural Emissary has been appointed instead.²⁰ Despite the differences in the status of their existence, all

¹⁹ The participants in the fourth FKN included representatives from the Riau-Lingga sultanate, whose pre-colonial domains now straddle three political entities- Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. In 2006, there were thirty-four representatives in the fifth FKN held at Surakarta (KCM, 8 Sep 2006).

²⁰ A dignitary of a Cultural Emissary explained this to me when I asked him the reasons for calling his ‘king’ a *Kepala Adat* when the others have been re-installed as kings. Van Klinken (2006) classified the leaders of the various *keraton* into *tokoh adat* (“cultural figures”); *panembahan* or *pangeran ratu* (“slightly less august rulers than the sultan”); *pemangku adat* (“bearer of customs”); *raja* (“non-Islamic kings”); and other titles.

representatives attended the FKN as though they were delegations from their respective 'kingdoms'.

In the fourth FKN-IV at Yogyakarta, two projects reinforced my speculation on the emerging aristocracy. The first was the existence of the *Forum Komunikasi dan Informasi Keraton se-Nusantara* (FKIKN, All-Indonesia Keraton Information and Communication Forum). FKIKN reflected an ambition that could possibly place the kings and their aristocracies as another important group in the dynamics of relations in Indonesian politics.²¹ Although the *keraton* no longer hold *de jure* control of their *negara*, they could wield *de facto* control via means of relations with influential individuals and organisations as well as their own involvement in local politics.²²

The second project was the fourth *Dialog Budaya Nusantara* (Archipelago Cultural Dialogue), which discussed the challenge of globalisation and the merits of local cultures.²³ In this *Dialog Budaya*, representatives of the 'kingdoms' from Sumatra to the Moluccas argued about

²¹ In March 2006, members of the FKIKN met at a Bali Conference to discuss and propose a constitutional guarantee of their existence to the government of Indonesia. (Donald Tick, personal email)

²² Ari (2004) observed that the conferring of titles to politicians and prominent members of society serves as an effective strategy for co-opting them into the Keraton. This strategy is similar to the practice by Malaysian sultanates in conferring titles to individuals who brought honour to the state or made substantial contributions. When General Wiranto was conferred a title in August 1999, there were suspicions that the Keraton had a political motive. General Wiranto's conferment based on his contributions and to remind him the need to have cultural considerations in his decision-making. (*Solopos*, 22 Aug 1999).

²³ The first *Dialog Budaya* for 2004 was held on 8 June at Pekanbaru. Later, it was held at Makassar (16 June) and Surakarta (30 June), before it was finally held at Yogyakarta (28-29 September).

their roles in contemporary Indonesia.²⁴ Although the *Dialog Budaya* gave an impression that the aristocracies had accepted their exclusion from the political domain, they agreed on possibilities that existed within the economic and civil society domains. In most of the scenarios portrayed, a common strategy was for the establishment of the *keraton* as 'cultural centres'.

In addition to these revivals, there were instances of contests of succession to be king. In Cirebon, two kings contested for the same throne (KR, 14 Jun 2004); and in Surakarta, a similar contest for succession occurred in 2004 when Pakubuwana XII passed away in June that year. These contests for succession suggested that it should still be viable to be a king. However, what powers would such a king possess in contemporary Java? Without an understanding of the ideas of power relevant to those who aspired and found motivation in being a king, it would be difficult to appreciate the relationship between ritual, heritage and power.

This thesis would show that while Keraton Surakarta might have appeared to have used their royal rituals wisely to consolidate their 'power' ('pomp served power'), its heritage would make that relationship complex. This would be due to the notion that the *keraton* would have to possess some 'power' in order to use the sacred artefacts which have been an important part of their royal rituals. Hence, the relationship between ritual, heritage and

²⁴ This matter was discussed in the summary session held on 28 September 2004 at Inna Garuda Hotel, Yogyakarta.

power would hinge on the relevant and prevailing ideas of 'power'. Without a relevant idea of power, the debate on whether 'power served pomp' or 'pomp served power' could not be concluded.

In addition, some sense about the viability to be a king in contemporary Java would probably provide some perspectives on the motivations to conduct *keraton* rituals. Understanding the motivation for conducting *keraton* rituals would then be one other way to assess the relationship between ritual and power.

ORGANISATION

Subsequently, I have organised subsequent chapters thematically. Some discussions will be repeated so as to emphasise certain arguments. In Chapter 2 – “Context: Main Ideas and Literature Review”, the main ideas, references and background readings would be highlighted. The Bibliography at the end of this thesis would provide the more extensive list.

The main exposition on my research begins with Chapter 3- “Subject: Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat”, which would provide a historical overview of the *keraton*; its relationship with the Republic of Indonesia; and the contemporary (and projected) position of the *keraton*.

The *keraton* rituals would be discussed in Chapter 4 – “Ritual: The Annual *Pasamuan Ageng*”. Here, my observations of the *Kirab Pusaka*, *Garebeg Mulud*, and *Tingalan Jumenengan* will show the extent to which these rituals

garnered public attention and participation. Deviating from earlier chronological accounts of these rituals, my emphasis would be on illuminating aspects of these rituals which relates to Javanese ideas of power and *pusaka* (sacred artefacts).

Pusaka would be fundamental items of the *Pasamuan Ageng* and contributed to the perceived potency of these rituals. Beyond exploring the relationship of *pusaka* with ideas of power in Chapter 5 – “Heritage: The *Pusaka* of the Keraton” – a schematic diagram explaining features of the idea of *pusaka* would be presented. This schematic diagram would show that the ideas of *pusaka* form the foundations for effective cultural heritage preservation. The preservation of the *pusaka* dance – *Bedhaya Ketawang* – showed that the idea of *pusaka* alone would be inadequate to provide the necessary motivations for cultural heritage preservation. Some form of ritual significance would be necessary.

In this thesis, my discussion on ‘power’ would be limited to those relevant for discussing issues of legitimacy, authority and leadership. In Chapter 6 – “Power: The Viability to be King” – the current leadership of the *keraton* would be assessed for its potential efficacy in ensuring the significance and relevance of the *keraton* in contemporary Java.

In the concluding Chapter 7 – “Reflections: Whither the Keraton or a Risen Phoenix?” – I would provide a summary of the main ideas and address the thesis that I have established.

CONTEXT

Main Ideas and Literature Review

My research was conducted within the context of a relationship, a phenomenon and a locality. Firstly, it followed earlier studies on royal rituals with respect to the relationship between ritual and power using Geertz's "theatre state" and Hobsbawm's "invented traditions" as the trigger for inquiry. However, this thesis extended this relationship (between ritual and power) by incorporating 'heritage' for a better appreciation of the situation in contemporary Java.

Secondly, my interest in this topic stemmed from observing progressive developments of Southeast Asian monarchies or aristocracies, both in locations in which they have been recognised politically (e.g. Malaysia, Thailand, Cambodia, and Brunei) as well as locations where their 'kingdoms' have been co-opted into a larger 'modern' nation-state (e.g. Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia).²⁵ This phenomenon of aristocratic

²⁵ Malaysia is the case where the *Yang Di-Pertuan Agung* and the Conference of Kings are recognised constitutionally and that the kingdoms of these kings were subsumed under the Federation of Malaysia. The nine kings of Malaysia form the Conference of Kings. A *Yang Di-Pertuan Agung* will be appointed from among the nine kings on a rotational basis every five years. At the near completion of this thesis, the Sultan of Terengganu is the *Yang Di-Pertuan Agung* of Malaysia.

revivalism could be seen in the Philippines, and especially in Indonesia. This showed that there must be reasons for the contemporary viability of the aristocracy, the *keraton* and possibly, the king.

Thirdly, my study was conducted in a locality which has not had any constitutional recognition of any of the pre-independence (pre-1945) monarchies or *negara*. All the territories under these *negara* have been subsumed under the Republic of Indonesia with Yogyakarta being granted the status of a “Special Province” and the only king in Java to have some form of political power as the concurrent Governor of Yogyakarta province. Keraton Surakarta has acknowledged its current status as a ‘cultural centre’ (Yayasan Pawiyatan (YP), 2004:350; Wirabhumi, 2004:18; *Tempo*, 16 Feb 1985) and through its possession of cultural resources, continued to make attempts to wield their influence over some segments of Indonesian society. However, the *keraton*’s dominance of cultural discourses which might affect the king’s and aristocracy’s charisma has yet to be established. An appreciation of the dominance on cultural discourses would be important as Ricklefs (1998:223-8) suggested that domination of cultural discourses could be an expression of ‘power’.

Given these three contexts, this Chapter will share some of the main ideas and fundamental references that have been used for this thesis. Apart from the comprehensive English, Malay and Indonesian collections that the National University of Singapore library possessed, I had benefited from

access to the libraries at the Keraton Surakarta, the Radya Pustaka Museum and the Pura Mangku Negara in Solo. These libraries provided additional materials such as newspaper clippings, unpublished theses and books which have been out of print, such Bram *et al* (2001), *Raja di Alam Republik*. Due to my inability to read Dutch and Javanese, I am deprived of reference materials in those languages. Nevertheless, the references in English, Malay and Indonesian have provided a wealth of information relevant to my thesis.

THE 'KERATON' – MORE THAN A PALACE

The cities of Yogyakarta and Surakarta lie in the heart of Java and at the heart of all things Javanese...it is not possible to understand these cities without exploring the world of the [*keraton*]...Those who have no attention for detail and symbolism might very well leave the [*keraton*] somewhat disappointed, not at all realizing the richness and meaning that become visible when the [*keraton*]world starts to be unveiled.

(van Beek, 1990:7)

The Javanese and their worldview could be appreciated in several ways. In 1996 and 1997, I studied the relevance of *Ruwatan Murwakala* – a pre-Islamic exorcism and purification ritual using *wayang kulit* – to Javanese Muslims in Central Java. In that endeavour, I learnt about Javanese life and society by appreciating the *wayang kulit*, following the approaches by Keeler (1991) and Anderson (1965).²⁶ Similarly, Behrend (1982) and Mimi (2006) chose to study the Javanese by appreciating the architecture and design of the

²⁶ The relationship between *wayang kulit* and Javanese society has been discussed in almost every study on *wayang kulit*. Refer to my bibliography in **Kala and the Crescent**; and Arps (1990), "Writings on Wayang: Approaches to Puppet Theatre in Java and Bali in Fifteen Books".

keraton. In my experience with exploring my own genealogy and heritage, I would agree with van Beek (1990) that the “*keraton* world” has much to offer anyone’s appreciation of the two most heritage-rich cities of Java.

Research on the *keraton* has to be pieced together from a myriad of literatures which dealt with a number of topics and issues relating to Java or the Javanese. While this meant that the bibliography would be long, it also reinforced the sentiment that the *keraton* has to be appreciated in order to understand the Javanese. However, Miksic & Heins (Ed.) (2004), *Karaton Surakarta* provided adequate resource for the lay reader as well as the serious scholar; and has been my basic reference to verify facts that I gathered during my fieldwork.

In my reading of these materials, I have learnt that the *keraton* has been more than a ‘palace’. The *keraton* has been usually interpreted as the ‘residence of the king’ – a ‘palace’ – and most writings on the *keraton* made such a strong affiliation of ‘*keraton*’ with its physical aspects (Van Beek, 1990:2; Geertz, 1980:99; Robson, 2003:xi). Behrend (1982:242) asserted that it has been through the architecture that the cosmic harmony or *toto tentrem* would be maintained. Robson (2003:xi) mentioned that when seen in the architectural perspective, the *keraton* has been more than a building; it would be a complex of buildings. Hence, when I refer to the physical and architectural aspect of the *keraton*, I would be using ‘*keraton* complex’.

In his thesis, Behrend (1982:242) noted that the *keraton* and the king have been two “essential elements that together create and maintain the Javanese world”. However, it was Surjandjari (1996:35-45) that explained that there has been more to a *keraton* than its palace or architecture.

‘*Keraton*’ has been said to be derived from the word ‘ke-ratu-an’, which referred to the state of having a ‘ratu’ (Gunawan, 2001; Surjandjari, 1996:37; Behrend, 1982). This term can be compared to the term ‘ke-raja-an’ in the Malay sultanates of Malaysia which referred to the state of having a ‘raja’. In the Philippines, reference would be made to a ‘ke-datu-an’, referring to the state of having a ‘datu’. In the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, reference is sometimes made to a ‘ke-sultan-an’, instead of the other three references for the purpose of exemplifying an Islamic kingdom.

In this appreciation of *keraton* as *ke-ratu-an*, the *Ratu* (king) could be seen as the *isi* (contents) or *batin* (essence) and the *keraton* would be the *wadah* (container) or *lahir* (physical attribute) (Woodward, 1989; Behrend, 1982; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:100-101). The *keraton* would be the *wadah* “endowed with a spirit that contains positive symbols and signs, and with certain magical vibrations” whose architecture represented the order of the macrocosm, resulting in the aura of authority (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:100-101). In addition, the architecture of the *keraton* replicated the *pajupat* design, placing it as the centre (*Ibid.*). According to Behrend (1982:243), it has been due to the *keraton* as the “conduit to the heavens”, that the king “is powerless

without the transcendent space created by the kraton". Despite the fundamental role of the *keraton* in asserting the king's authority as described by some scholars here, it was not mentioned as an element of authority in Soemarsaid (1981) or Moedjanto (1987) when they wrote about the application of power to assert authority. It would either be that the king has been synonymous with the *keraton*, or that the *keraton* would not figure in the textual interpretations of state and statecraft.

Apart from being the 'centre of authority', the *keraton* has been considered as the hearth where Javanese court culture and knowledge has been preserved, developed and disseminated. Pemberton (1994) opined that the *keraton* flourished as a 'cultural authority' from the time it was established, beginning with the move from Kartasura to Surakarta. His appreciation of the *keraton* in terms of rituals, wedding and other ceremonies emphasised the *keraton's* preoccupation with protocols, dressing, codes of conduct, pageantry and prestige – elements which established "Javanese identity". This image of the *keraton* as a 'cultural authority' was supposedly entrenched when PB-XII surrendered his territories to the Republic of Indonesia in 1945 (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:350). Hence, when Megawati (2001) considered the *keraton* as the epitome and consolidation of the arts and culture par excellence, it was an assertion of that status as a 'cultural authority'. To her, the *keraton* has been more than the contemporary image of a 'tourist attraction' – it can be used as a platform to reflect the development of a national culture (Megawati, 2001:ix-

x). This contemporary conception of the *keraton* reinforced the assumptions of Kepres No. 23/88 issued by then President Suharto – that the *keraton* has been part of “*peninggalan budaya bangsa*” (the national cultural heritage).

As a ‘cultural centre’ since 1988, Keraton Surakarta could lean towards being a ‘museum’ as defined by the International Council of Museums (ICOM); an ‘ecomuseum’ (Davis, 1999); or extendably a ‘cultural institution’ (Carr, 2003). Davis (1999:70) described ‘ecomuseum’ as a museum concept in which the essential feature would be the significance of community involvement; and according to Carr (2003:xiii), ‘cultural institutions’ would be “places created to hold and preserve objects and texts, to expand the boundaries of public knowledge associated with those artifacts and words, and to open possibilities of learning in the contexts of everyday life”. There have been various models on what a ‘cultural centre’ could be based, but the fundamental role of such an institution would be the preservation of cultural heritage.

A discussion of the *keraton* itself would be insufficient. The Susuhunan²⁷ (king) and his *keraton* have been essential elements of the Javanese world and that the “state is born only of their union” (Behrend, 1982:243). When I began this research, PB-XII was reigning as the last king in Indonesia to have accessioned the throne before the Declaration of

²⁷ ‘Susuhunan’ is the title used by the kings of Mataram and Surakarta since the reign of Sultan Agung. (Ricklefs, 1993:43, 47)

Independence in August 1945. Midway through my research, a succession contest emerged resulting in the accession of two PB-XIIIs. Other than *Karaton Surakarta*, which appeared to commemorate PB-XII's 60-years reign, Bram *et al.* (2001), *Raja di Alam Republik*, served as another reference. The succession conflict emphasised the importance of ideas about legitimacy, authority and leadership and their relation to ideas of power. In assessing the 'power' of the two PB-XIIIs in these terms, it has been more pragmatic to consider them as two groups rather than individuals (the king and his 'party'). Each group could be perceived as 'political parties' contesting to ensure the reign of their respective Susuhunan. Unlike the political parties of Indonesia, they were not privileged with an election that could end the stalemate. Instead, they continue to rely on the 'traditional' ideas of power connected to the issues of legitimacy, authority and leadership.

MAKING SENSE OF 'RITUAL'

In the context of the *keraton*, it would be difficult to discuss 'ritual' without reference to 'power'. Nevertheless, 'ritual' has been defined as a "formal action... that is expressive of communal values, meanings and beliefs"; "entailed some link with sacred, supernatural or magical worlds"; and "serves the function of integrating the individual more closely into the social whole" (Edgar and Sedgwick, 2002:340-1). Ritual has also been said to be enactments which aim to maintain continuity with the past through

repeated performance with a specific frequency and on a predetermined occasion. While rituals could be easily confused with activities that are commonly performed but not repeated, a reference to 'ritualisation' might not necessarily provide a better appreciation of such activities. While rituals appear to establish some form of continuity from the past, they could represent a sort of displacement and the imagination of the 'authentic' (Pemberton, 1994). The *keraton* rituals that I have observed – the *Kirab Pusaka*, *Garebeg Mulud* and *Tinggalan Dalem Jumenengan* – possessed these characteristics and it would be important to establish this so as to differentiate *keraton* rituals from other ceremonies conducted at Keraton Surakarta. In addition, the *keraton* rituals appeared to have the purpose of reifying the position of the aristocracy as suggested by Cannadine (1987:12) who considered royal rituals as providing the pomp and pageantry which formed the "integral parts of the political process and structure of power".

In this perspective, *keraton* rituals could be considered in the same light that rituals could generally be seen as an "increasingly contested and expanding arena for resistance, negotiation and affirmation of identity" (Hughes-Freeland and Crain, 1998:1). In the case of the *keraton* rituals, they have been an arena for the aristocrats to resist the orientation of the Javanese away from the *keraton*; negotiated the *keraton's* significance; and affirmed the *keraton's* identity as the cultural focal point of the Javanese.

As I have mentioned, one *keraton* ritual could be considered as an ‘invented tradition’, based on Hobsbawm’s assertion that, “[t]raditions’ which appear or claim to be old are quite often recent in origin and sometimes invented” (1983:1). The *Kirab Pusaka*, which was introduced in 1974, was introduced following a request from the then President Suharto for the *keraton* to commission a ritual that would ensure peace and harmony in the new Republic of Indonesia, which went beyond the previous territories of Surakarta (Bram *et al.*, 2001:259-260; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:11). *Kirab Pusaka* could be an ‘invention’, but some participants of the ritual had the impression that the ritual had existed “since the old days” (Pemberton, 1994:163). I shared the same impression when I first participated in the ritual in the late 1980s – those who explained the ritual to me during then did not appear to perceive the ritual as a recent ‘invention’. Hence, when I learnt that it was a recent ‘invention’, I began to read more about it and found that it had part of its precedence from a practice by PB-X to make his herd of albino buffaloes circumambulate within the palace whenever there was a need to transmit an aura of protection.

Hobsbawm (1983) had qualified ‘invented traditions’ as encompassing rituals which sought to appear connected to or establish continuity with the past. In defining ‘invented traditions’, he distinguished ‘tradition’ from ‘custom’ and ‘routine’ (or ‘convention’) – i.e. there should be some extraordinary element to ‘tradition’. An ‘invention of tradition’ occurred

when the practices inherent in a 'tradition' needed to adapt to a new environment or condition (Hobsbawm, 1983). Although *Kirab Pusaka* was invented in 1974, it was 'constructed from "ancient materials" obtained from the "warehouses of official ritual, symbolism and moral exhortation" (Hobsbawm, 1983:6). The *keraton* has a 'warehouse' or repository of cultural resources at its disposal, from tangible to intangible forms, mostly *pusaka*. 'Invented traditions' were constructed for three types of purposes, which have been embodied in the *keraton* rituals of the *Pasamuan Ageng*:

a) those establishing or symbolising social cohesions or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities, b) those establishing or legitimising institutions, status or relations of authority, and c) those whose main purpose was socialisation, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems and conventions of behaviour.

(Hobsbawm, 1983:9)

In the case of Keraton Surakarta, it seemed that its rituals provided the platform for the consolidation of power and a binding relationship between the Susuhunan (king) and the *rakyat* (people). Woodward (1989) suggested that the popular practices of religion in Java could have been connected to "state cults" centred on the *keraton*. Soemarsaid (1981) mentioned the existence of a "Cult of Glory" in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries that might be similar to the "state cults" that Woodward mentioned. In another perspective, *keraton* rituals could be an elaborate rendition of popular rituals.

In a study of royal baths in Madagascar, Bloch (1987) showed that this royal ritual was basically a royal rendition of an ordinary ritual of blessing. Similarly, *keraton* rituals could be an elaborate form of a *slametan*. *Slametan* has

been a common thanksgiving ritual and considered to be a fundamental attribute of being Javanese (Geertz, 1960:11-15; Koentjaraningrat, 1984:344-9; Beatty, 1999:25-50; Mulder, 1998:85-86; Suwardi, 2003:10-11). However, Headley (2004:61-62) made a distinction between the *slametan* – which he considered as “the traditional Javanese ritual meal” – and the *kendhuri* or *sadhekah*, which he explained as “Muslim communal meals”. In the *keraton* rituals that I have observed, there has always been a ritual or communal meal either at the start or towards the end of the rituals. However, there was no evidence to suggest that the *keraton* ritual or communal meal has been an elaborate rendition of popular rituals, and while it was referred to as a *slametan*, the prayers recited in the ‘ritual meal’ has been Islamic – in the sense that verses from the Quran were recited. For the purpose of this thesis, it would not be prudent to debate about the ‘Islamic-ness’ of such rituals.

There has been a reasonable amount of literature on *keraton* rituals. *Karaton Surakarta and Religions and Rituals in Indonesia*, (Volume 10, *Indonesian Heritage*) provided comprehensive overview of *keraton* and Javanese rituals respectively. Other accounts could be pieced together from writings about the *keraton*. At the Sasono Pustoko (library) of the *keraton*, some studies on rituals were concerned with the Islamic relevance of these rituals (Budiasih, 1996; Suhandi, 2005; Suwito, 1992); or were focussed on details about a particular element of these rituals, such as the *Bedhaya Ketawang* (Suwarni, 1996; Dayu, 1999; Djanjang 2004). In addition to these studies on *keraton* rituals, a number

of articles written in Dutch during the early twentieth century were translated and compiled in Robson (Ed.) (2003), *The Kraton: Selected Essays on Javanese Courts*. Although these articles were mostly about the Yogyakarta *keraton*, the similarities in the type and conduct of the rituals proved useful.

The *keraton* rituals which I observed were performed annually based on the Javanese-Islamic calendar. During the reign of Sultan Agung in the 17th century, the Javanese lunar calendar was synchronized with the Islamic one to affirm the Islamic identity of the Sultan and his kingdom (Ricklefs, 1974:17). The Javanese-Islamic calendar differed from the Hijrah calendar in that it continued to put in place the 5-day week cycle (*pasar*) superimposed on the 7-day week cycle (*wuku*) (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:290-1; van Ossenbruggen, 1918:54). Koentjaraningrat (1984:422) stated that contemporary Javanese would be inclined to refer to both the Saka and Javanese-Islamic calendar. Keraton Surakarta would publish their version of the Javanese-Islamic calendar and distributed copies of it among members of the *keraton*; and these calendars could be purchased at the Museum one to two months before the start of the Javanese-Islamic New Year.

REINTERPRETING 'POWER'

Power exists in relationships and power relations form the basis of hierarchy. Power has been defined as "the ability to achieve a desired

outcome” and “the ability to influence the behaviour of others” (Heywood, 2002:7). In discussing about the power of the king or the *keraton*, this definition of ‘power’ would be fundamental in understanding the extent of legitimacy, authority and leadership as expressed through the conduct of *keraton* rituals and the leverage on *keraton* heritage – the *pusaka*.

As the subject of my study is a Javanese institution, it would be useful to consider Anderson’s (1972) “The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture”. According to Anderson (1972:8) Javanese conceived power as something “concrete, homogeneous, constant in total quantity and without inherent moral implications”. This idea that power has been ‘concrete’ or could be contained in “organic and inorganic matter” (Anderson, 1972:7) have existed in other societies – Beowulf had his ancient sword *Nagling*; King Arthur, the sword *Excalibur*; Filipino revolutionaries, their *anting-anting* (amulets) (Ileto, 1979; Borchgrevink, 2003); Gypsies, their amulets; and of course the Javanese, their *pusaka*. Hence, the idea of ‘power’ as something ‘concrete’ has not been a uniquely Javanese conception. It was reasonable for Anderson (1972:3) to qualify that he did not assume that the Javanese ideas of power were peculiarly unique, but formed a “unique amalgam”.

An important observation in my study was the affirmation that an important element of the relationship between the *keraton* and segments of contemporary Javanese society has been “the belief on the part of followers that their leader has Power” (Anderson 1972:66). Regardless of the idea of

power that prevailed in the minds of those who participated and contributed towards the success of each *keraton* rituals, the support for the *keraton* in these rituals showed some degree of influence the *keraton* wielded over segments of contemporary Javanese society. However, in order to appreciate the idea of *pusaka* better, an appreciation of power as “concrete, homogenous, constant in total quantity and without inherent moral implications” (*Ibid.*:8) would be necessary.

It could be that the possession of *pusaka* and the ability to conduct *keraton* rituals had given some of its participants a sense that the *keraton* possessed ‘Power’ in the concrete sense; or it could be that the *keraton*’s ability to influence and control others through ritual protocols had portrayed the *keraton*’s power in the abstract sense. Either way, the *keraton* could be perceived as having consolidated their ‘power’ through the conduct of *keraton* rituals.

The succession conflict that occurred in the *keraton* in 2004 provided some basis to assess how the *keraton* rituals and the *pusaka* interplayed with issues of legitimacy, authority and leadership. In determining the legitimacy of the successor, a fundamental difference that was emphasised was the ability to stage the accession to the throne within the *keraton* and the performance of the *Bedhaya Ketawang* to portray continuity with the past. Another aspect of legitimacy would be the capacity and ability to perform the

keraton rituals as well as to be in possession of the repository of mystical powers contained in their *pusaka*.

In assessing the legitimacy for being king, the manifestation of *wahyu* ('revelation from God') was considered as important. Although *wahyu* was derived from the Arabic *wahy*, like all adoptions of foreign words, its meaning might differ within the respective local contexts in much the same way that Muslims in the region had used the Sanskrit-derived Hindu-related word *syurga* to refer to 'heaven'. It would be inappropriate to suggest that such Muslims have had a Hindu conception of 'heaven'. Hence, scholars who studied about *wahyu* in legitimacy issues had referred to *wahyu* within its contextualised meanings. Mulder (1998:30) considered *wahyu* to be the "supernatural mandate to rule", which has been widely appreciated as the basic pre-requisite for legitimacy.

In the endeavour to maintain an aura of authority, Soemarsaid (1981) claimed that the kings of Mataram in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries relied on a "Cult of Glory" whereas Moedjanto (1987) opined that it was more of *Keagunghinataraan*, which can be interpreted as "the great divineness" of the king. At this point, it would be tempting to compare the "Cult of Glory" and *Keagunghinataraan* with the "Devaraja Cult" (Kulke, 1978; Mabbett, 1969); or see them as extension of the beliefs in the 'men of prowess' (Wolters, 1982). These concepts have been reliant on the idea that some individuals would possess some degree of internal strength or capabilities.

According to Soemarsaid (1981:144), a clear distinction has been made between physical natural strength and the ability to “emanate an extraordinary force”, which could only be possible with the possession of *sakti* – “supernatural powers”. ‘*Sakti*’ has been derived from the Sanskrit ‘*syakti*’, and that *sakti* can only be possessed by individuals who are physically and spiritually strong; animals such as tigers, elephants and tortoises; and non-living things such as *pusaka* (Koentjaraningrat, 1984:341). The Javanese *kesekten* or Indonesian *kesaktian* would refer to the possession of *sakti* or “gifted with supernatural powers” (Soemarsaid, 1981:144). In Anderson’s (1972) interpretation of the Javanese idea of power, he has been referring to *sakti* and *kesaktian*.

While *wahyu* and *sakti* have been emphasised in most discussions on legitimacy and authority in Java, the idea of *kerakyatan* as the basis for efficacious leadership was introduced by Purwadi (2004), Bram *et al.* (2001) and Moedjanto (1987). This idea of *kerakyatan* has also been discussed within the concepts of *kawula-gusti* (servant-master), *memayu hayuning buwana* (protecting world peace); and in the virtues of the ideal king in the *Asta Brata* (Suwardi, 2003; Soemarsaid, 1981; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004).

In discussing about the viability to be king and the relevance of the *keraton*, both the abstract idea of power as commonly understood and the Javanese idea of power would be necessary. While the ‘power’ of the king and *keraton* could be discussed in terms of how they possessed “the ability to

achieve a desired outcome” and “the ability to influence the behaviour of others”; the Javanese idea of ‘power’ would be necessary to understand the idea of *pusaka*.

THE KERATON’S HERITAGE – THE *PUSAKA*

Heritage has received considerable attention given its role in the formation of national identities (Anderson, 1991; Peleggi, 2002). The fundamental role of heritage in nation-building has been reflected by the proliferation of museums and cultural institutions (Kreps, 1994; Taylor, 1994; Pemberton, 1994). This would be particularly evident in the case of Indonesia where the number of museums grew from 29 in 1945 to about 262 in 2000 (Kreps, 1994:129; 2003:25). The fact that a number of *keraton* (including Keraton Surakarta) have been designated as museums meant that the *keraton* and their assets have been co-opted as part of Indonesia’s heritage (Depdikbud, 1994).

‘Heritage’ has been said to have been derived from ‘inheritance’- i.e. “something transferred from one generation to another”- and a “key component of the cultural tradition of a society” (Wiendu, 1999:iv). UNESCO defined ‘cultural heritage’ as being in both tangible and intangible forms and include a range of items – rituals, performing arts, ruins, monuments, sites, sculptures, manuscripts and so on.

Similarly, *pusaka* would generally refer to anything that has been inherited; an heirloom passed on from one generation to another; or a communally owned artefact which cannot be disposed of without collective agreement (Haryati, 1992:15). A basic reference for investigating the idea of *pusaka* would be the Haryati (Ed.) (1998), *Art of Indonesia: Pusaka* and Kreps (2005), *Liberating Culture*, specifically in Chapter 3.

Pusaka has been usually translated as 'heirlooms', 'heritage' or 'royal regalia'; and the three meanings cited from Haryati (1992) above could be interpreted as 'inheritance', 'heirloom' and 'heritage'. In Malay and Indonesian, other words that have similar meanings would be '*warisan*', '*khazanah*', '*peninggalan*' and '*wasiat*'.

The *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indie* provided quite a comprehensive description and explanation on '*pusaka*'. In summary, *pusaka* could be any object – inherited or otherwise – which has been perceived or believed to have been infused with spirits (usually ancestral) who can provide assistance and aid in exchange for offerings (usually in the form of incense). These *pusaka* would be revered objects which have been stored and preserved in the best possible manner. The maintenance and preservation of *pusaka* would be usually ritualised and involved some form of ceremony. The most revered form of *pusaka* would be the royal regalia, which often embodied the legitimacy of the king. Royal regalia that have been consecrated as *pusaka* would usually be a "mixed bag" with a varied typology of items. In the

Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, such royal regalia have been known by specific terms within each ethnic group.²⁸ However, *pusaka* can be in both tangible and intangible form; and no distinctions have been made between such forms.

Keraton Surakarta possessed a range of *pusaka* such as the royal regalia, horse carriages, musical instruments, dance choreography, scripts for *wayang kulit* performances, poetry, textiles, manuscripts and even an entire forest- the Krendowahono forest (Tsuchiya, 1990:92; Ricklefs, 1998; Surjandjari, 1996; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004).

In these interpretations, the *keraton's pusaka* form part of the *keraton's* heritage as these items have been passed from one generation to another. The idea of *pusaka* as something sacred has also been prevalent in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago. However, not all the *pusaka* in Keraton Surakarta were inherited. A number of them were items created to be consecrated as *pusaka* so that they will be preserved for use in the present and the future – i.e. being designated as sacred heirlooms.

Heirlooms have been a common human feature existing in most cultures (Lillios, 1999). In the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, the concept of *pusaka* has had a variety of interpretation and the Javanese conception seems to centre upon the relationship between *pusaka* and as power being 'concrete'.

²⁸ I based this summary on the English translation of the Dutch text of the *Encyclopaedie van Nederlandsch-Indie*, which have been included as a sort of appendix to the main articles in *Pusaka Art of Indonesia* (p 222-223).

However, this emphasis between *pusaka* and ‘concrete’ power has not been uniquely Javanese.

In the Philippines, Ileto (1979) explained that *anting-anting* were amulets which have been infused with protective powers. The Holy Week when the *Pasyon* rituals were conducted was the period when *anting-anting* were obtained and tested for its effectiveness. *Anting-anting* played a significant role in the “thinking and motivation of the peasant rebels, bandits, soldiers and even generals of the revolutionary army” (Ileto, 1979:22). Borchgrevink’s (2003) study on the notion of supernatural power among men in Bohol, Philippines provided a contemporary elucidation. Although the idea of power in Bohol seems to be similarly related to objects, a distinction could be made. *Pusaka* are fundamentally heirlooms that accumulate power for the present and the future, while the *anting-anting* described by Borchgrevink (2003) appeared to be temporally limited and do not possess other qualities of *pusaka* – i.e. its hierarchy, animated characteristics and management strategies.

Pusaka can be created but the purpose of their consecration as sacred items implied the intention for such items to be preserved as heirlooms. In the contemporary succession conflict in the *keraton*, it was evident that *pusaka* could be replicated as replicas were used during the accession of PB-XIII. Furthermore, considering that a number of *pusaka* were destroyed during the fire in 1985, most of the *pusaka* used today would probably be replicas.

Ricklefs (1998) had also cited accounts which revealed that *pusaka* were created to replace those which were missing or lost. A tour guide at the Kasultanan Ngayogyakarta explained that any item could be consecrated to become a *pusaka*. The guide related the story of how a tree was made into a musical instrument of the *gamelan* after HB-IX successfully hid from the Dutch behind it. The tree was made into a *pusaka* in the form of a musical instrument to be revered and honoured for perpetuity. Similarly, the herd of albino buffaloes that led the *Kirab* was consecrated as a *pusaka* by PB-X.

In appreciating the idea of *pusaka*, Benjamin's (1936) 'objects of cult value' with 'aura' came to mind. Like these 'objects of cult value', *pusaka* have been unapproachable, distant even when near and should be treated with reverence, and when it does get moved, it had been specifically for rituals or ceremonial occasions. In addition, *pusaka* could also possess "exhibition value" and would be fundamental 'props' in the performance of rituals (Kreps, 1994; Taylor, 1994). However, unlike these 'cult objects' – which become 'secular' objects over time (emancipation of art) – *pusaka* seemed to increase in 'aura' over time. As the idea of *pusaka* has been a social construct, a *pusaka* would lose its aura only when it had been taken out of the community in which it had existed or when the community no longer found them relevant or significant (Wahyono, 1992:129).

The management of *pusaka* at the *keraton* could be considered as an “indigenous form of cultural heritage preservation” (Kreps, 2004).²⁹ Building on the idea of *pusaka* as a form of cultural heritage preservation, I have developed a schematic diagram to appreciate *pusaka* as a means by which cultural heritage could be preserved. Through this schematic diagram and observations that I have made, I found that the idea(s) of *pusaka* alone would be insufficient to ensure the preservation of cultural heritage. There must be some form of ritual that would ensure the continued significance and relevance of the *pusaka*. Otherwise, as stated earlier, the *pusaka* would lose its ‘aura’.

Suwati (1992:159) attempted to identify some prerequisites for a *pusaka*, but referred to a “treasured heritage” instead. Nevertheless, the prerequisites were considered in terms of (1) Quality of workmanship and materials; (2) Aesthetic value; (3) History; and (4) Religious significance. She clarified that “an object satisfying all these criteria need not necessarily be a *pusaka*...[as] [t]he condition is more than a function of attributes” (*Ibid.*). In this respect, the pre-requisites considered above would be possible guidelines used, but not determinants of *pusaka*. However, Suwati’s (1992) reference to *pusaka* was limited to tangible items.

While the dominant feature of *pusaka* has been its antiquity, the actual reverence towards a *pusaka* depended on the perceived power it possessed.

²⁹ I am indebted to Dr. Christina Kreps for sending me a copy of her article.

Surjandjari (1996) explained that *pusaka* referred to anything which possessed unseen power (refer to Javanese idea of power), has been considered sacred and revered, held in high esteem, received the best care, and accorded special status. Through his philosophical discussion on the *Kirab Pusaka*, he explained that central to this ritual has been the belief that the protective powers of the *pusaka* could be extended beyond the *keraton* complex. In this ritual, the most supreme *pusaka* would be carried outside the *keraton* complex to ensure the synchronisation of micro- and macro-cosmos (*toto tentrem*), thereby bringing about peace and prosperity.

Pusaka has been believed to possess powers to protect, heal and harm (Haryati, 1992:15; Koentjaraningrat, 1984:342,418; Surjandjari, 1996:20). Although the perceived powers of *pusaka* could be directed by someone, their 'services' required constant, periodic and routine 'appeasement'. This 'appeasement' could come in the form of an 'offering' – *sesajen* – accompanied by fumigations with incense and ritual cleansing. In the *keraton*, the periodic and routine ceremony for the cleansing of *pusaka* would be held on every *Selasa Kliwon*, over a frequency of once every 35 days. While the rationale behind the 'appeasement' could be de-mystified with reference to its preservation methods, the sustainability of such acts (preservation activities) would be very dependent on the belief that *pusaka* has been 'alive' with desires, wishes, moods and idiosyncrasies. As animated entities, *pusaka* could also communicate through signs and possessed the ability to foretell events.

Hence, they would be given names with an honorific title – usually *Kyahi* for a male and *Nyai* for a female – and to some extent managed as a ‘person’ (Koentjaraningrat, 1984:342; Surjandjari, 1996:22).

Keraton pusaka has been considered to be the “most sacred” (Suwati, 1992:159) and ranked within a hierarchy with differential access. According to *Gusti Puger*, inherent in the ritual of ‘appeasing’ *pusaka* was the establishment of a hierarchy within the *keraton*. As *pusaka* have varying statuses and rank, the assignment of specific *pusaka* to a *sentono dalem* (princes) or *abdidalem* (*keraton* courtiers or servants) corresponded to their position in the *keraton* hierarchy. Hence, only the *Susuhunan* (king) would have access to the highest-ranked *pusaka* and the responsibility to ‘appease’ them. Consequently, members of the *keraton* could know of their relative positions in the *keraton* hierarchy by virtue of the *pusaka* that they have access to. In this respect, access to *pusaka* indicated a person’s position in the hierarchical structure of the *keraton*.³⁰

The significance and continued prevalence for the idea of *pusaka* would be a good indicator for the prevalence of the Javanese idea(s) of power.

³⁰ *Gusti Puger* explained that the hierarchy established in the preservation of *pusaka* ensures that every member of the *Keraton* has a role in the care for the *pusaka*. Correspondingly, due to the nature of *pusaka*, the more powerful ones can only be cared for by those perceived to possess that power. It is usually assumed that the higher the rank, the greater the ability to care for different levels of *pusaka*. Hence, the position of an individual in the hierarchy of the *Keraton* can somewhat be reflected by access to *pusaka*. The differentiated access and the corresponding prioritisation of preservation for *pusaka* were also prevalent in the *keraton* of Yogyakarta. In the four days commencing either on a Tuesday-*Kliwon* or Friday-*Kliwon* in the month of Suro, the *pusaka* of the *keraton* would be cleaned in an order reflective of their rank and status. Similarly, specific groups of people were assigned to clean separate categories of *pusaka*. (Poeroebaja, 1941: 249-254)

As a social construct, the idea of *pusaka* and the corresponding reverence or veneration applied would be dependent on the idea that power is 'concrete' and could be contained within the *pusaka*. Without this idea of power, the *pusaka* would lose its 'aura' and probably, its significance. Hence, as long as these *pusaka* would be revered, venerated and preserved in some form, it would indicate that the idea the Javanese idea of power has prevailed.

In providing an overview of the main ideas and the corresponding literature review in this Chapter, I had hoped that my subsequent discussions about the specifics of the rituals, heritage and power could be appreciated within the context that I have established here. Having been somewhat genealogically Javanese and my familiarity with the *keraton*, I might unintentionally overlook some bias.

Firstly, as Anderson (1972:4) had pointed out in his footnote that it would not be easy for him to interpret and translate the Javanese idea of 'power' as "the Javanese has no equivalent concept or word". Similarly, the concept and idea of *pusaka* peculiar to each community or society within the Malay-Indonesian archipelago might not be easily interpreted and translated outside the context of its social construct. For example, in the idea of *pusaka* prevailing in the *keraton*, there would be no need to distinguish between tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, as I have had a set of *pusaka* within my family, it has been difficult for me to be detached from a

subjective and probably emotional perspective. Nevertheless, a contemporary perspective from Kreps (2004) had provided me with some ideas on the ways in which I could discuss about *pusaka*.

Secondly, I have been more inclined to use the Malay or Indonesian terms over Javanese ones due to my interest in connecting this thesis to a bilingual English and Malay-speaking audience in Singapore. Personally, I have learned Malay as a second language in school; did not obtain formal training in Indonesian and could only understand bits of conversational Javanese. Hence, I am more inclined to understand the Malay conceptions of both Indonesian and Javanese ideas. However, as I have been “immersed” in Javanese cultural practices since young and have travelled to Yogyakarta and Solo at least one a year since the late 1980s, I have been able to appreciate and understand such ideas in their contextualised perspectives.

Thirdly, my participation in some of the *keraton* rituals before the start of this study has provided me with some “insider” perspective. However, I find myself in the same situation described by Narayan (2001) in which I have shifting identities – being both the “outsider” and “insider”; and being Javanese, Malay and/or Singaporean – when observing the *keraton* rituals and interacting with the people involved in my fieldwork. As much as I would like to maintain an objective view of my work, I would agree with Narayan (2001) that my knowledge derived from my fieldwork has been “situated, negotiated, and part of an ongoing process” and that this process spans my

“personal, professional and cultural domains” (Narayan, 2001:319). The manner in which this thesis has been divided into seven chapters in three parts with verses dividing the parts has been my way of “protecting” this thesis from the ‘aura’ of the *pusaka* and rituals that I would be discussing. In my own ways, I might have shown how the subject and issues discussed here would also represent the negotiations between objectivity and subjectivity; personal and impersonal; insider and outsider; and lastly, Javanese and non-Javanese perspectives.

Lastly, I would not claim that my observations here would represent a holistic overview of the *keraton* rituals. My descriptions and perceptions were derived from a limited perspective and observation of *keraton* rituals in 2004 and 2005. The conclusions that I have made here would be my attempts in making sense of the pieces of observations and readings about the issues I have established earlier over a span of two to three years in which I have spent about at least a month at the *keraton* for each of the rituals I have observed.

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

*Say,
"I seek refuge in the Lord of men,
the King of Men,
the God of men,
from the mischief of the slinking prompter,
who whispers in the hearts of men,
from jinn and men."*

(Surah An-Nas)

Surah An-Nas with *Surah Al-Ikhlās* and *Surah Al-Falaq* form the three main verses recited in most prayers during Javanese rituals. Personally, I have been taught that these verses are the basic ones that I need to master.

SUBJECT

Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat

“...Mataram became, until the Dutch reduced it in the eighteenth century, the greatest Islamised state of Indonesia, a Muslim Madjapahit.”

(Geertz, 1968:26)

The Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat was established by Pakubuwana II (PB-II) in 1745 in present day Solo City, Central Java, Indonesia, but the formal move to Surakarta was completed in early 1746. PB-II moved his *keraton* from Kartasura to Surakarta following two major invasions – first, by the Chinese and later by Chakraningrat IV, the Madurese king who was taking advantage of the Chinese rebellion to free his kingdom from the dominance of Central Java. The Chinese were rebelling against the Dutch and the Javanese were caught in between the two sides. The Chinese invaded Kartasura after PB-II decided to withdraw his support for the Chinese rebellion. As a result of these two acts of aggression, the *keraton* at Kartasura was no longer a viable location for an exemplary centre.

The migration from an old to a new centre of authority has been a historical routine for Mataram kings. Geertz (1980) had shown how the same

trend occurred in Bali. The Islamic Mataram kingdom was established in 16th Century Java at Kota Gedhe, near present-day Yogyakarta. In 1680, Mataram's centre moved to Kartasura. From Kartasura, the centre moved to Surakarta.



Figure 3

Entrance to the mausoleum of Panembahan Senopati, founder of the Mataram dynasty from which the present-day royal households of Central Java – Paku Buwono, Hamengku Buwono, Mangku Negara and Paku Alam – descended from. This mausoleum is located at Kota Gedhe, the site for the first *keraton* of the Mataram Dynasty.

In 1755, the Mataram kingdom was split into Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Despite the split, it would be important to note that Surakarta was a Mataram *keraton* from 1745 to 1755. Following the formation of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945, Surakarta became part of this new republic and part of the Central Java province whose capital would be Semarang. Unlike

Yogyakarta which was designated as *Daerah Istimewa* (Special Region), Surakarta lost all its vestiges of *Vorstenlanden* and the *keraton's de jure* influence were reduced to the limits of the *keraton* walls.

Ricklefs (1993:223) wrote that PB-XII (r. 1944-2004) “fumbled opportunities to play a positive role in the [Indonesian] revolution and thus never gained control of events”. In contrast, the Sultan of Yogyakarta, Hamengkubuwana IX (r. 1939-88) cooperated with the subsidiary prince, Pakualam VIII (1938-1999) to take positive steps towards reforming Yogyakarta and supported the revolution. Such cooperation did not exist between PB-XII and the subsidiary prince at Surakarta – Mangkunegara VIII (r. 1944-1987). In 1946, the capital of the newly-formed Republic was moved to Yogyakarta for almost the duration of the Indonesian revolution. The choices made by each of the kings and princes during the revolution had impacted the future status of their respective kingdoms in the Republic of Indonesia.

Under President Suharto's rule, PB-XII continued to distance himself from the central government in Jakarta. He resisted any form of co-option into the plans of the central government until a major fire in 1985 which destroyed important buildings of the *keraton* and paved the way for the conversion of the *keraton* into a ‘cultural centre’.

KEPUTUSAN PRESIDEN (KEPRES) NO. 23/88

In 1988, Kepres No. 23/88 recognised the *keraton* as a national cultural heritage which needed to be preserved as part of national culture and tourism. This document separated the *keraton* into three parts - the king (Sri Susuhunan), the palace complex (*tanah dan bangunan Keraton Kasunanan Surakarta*) and the aristocracy (*Kasunanan Surakarta*). This decree allowed the Susuhunan (king) to retain possession of the *keraton* complex including the Grand Mosque and Alun-Alun. The Susuhunan as the leader of the *keraton* would be allowed to use the *keraton* complex and all its facilities to conduct rituals, ceremonies and festivals as part of the traditions of the *keraton*. Hence, whatever idealised conceptions that might have prevailed, the *keraton* has been perceived legally as constituting three parts from 1988. Henceforth, the aristocracy of the *keraton* will be referred to as the Kasunanan.

TOUR OF THE PALACE

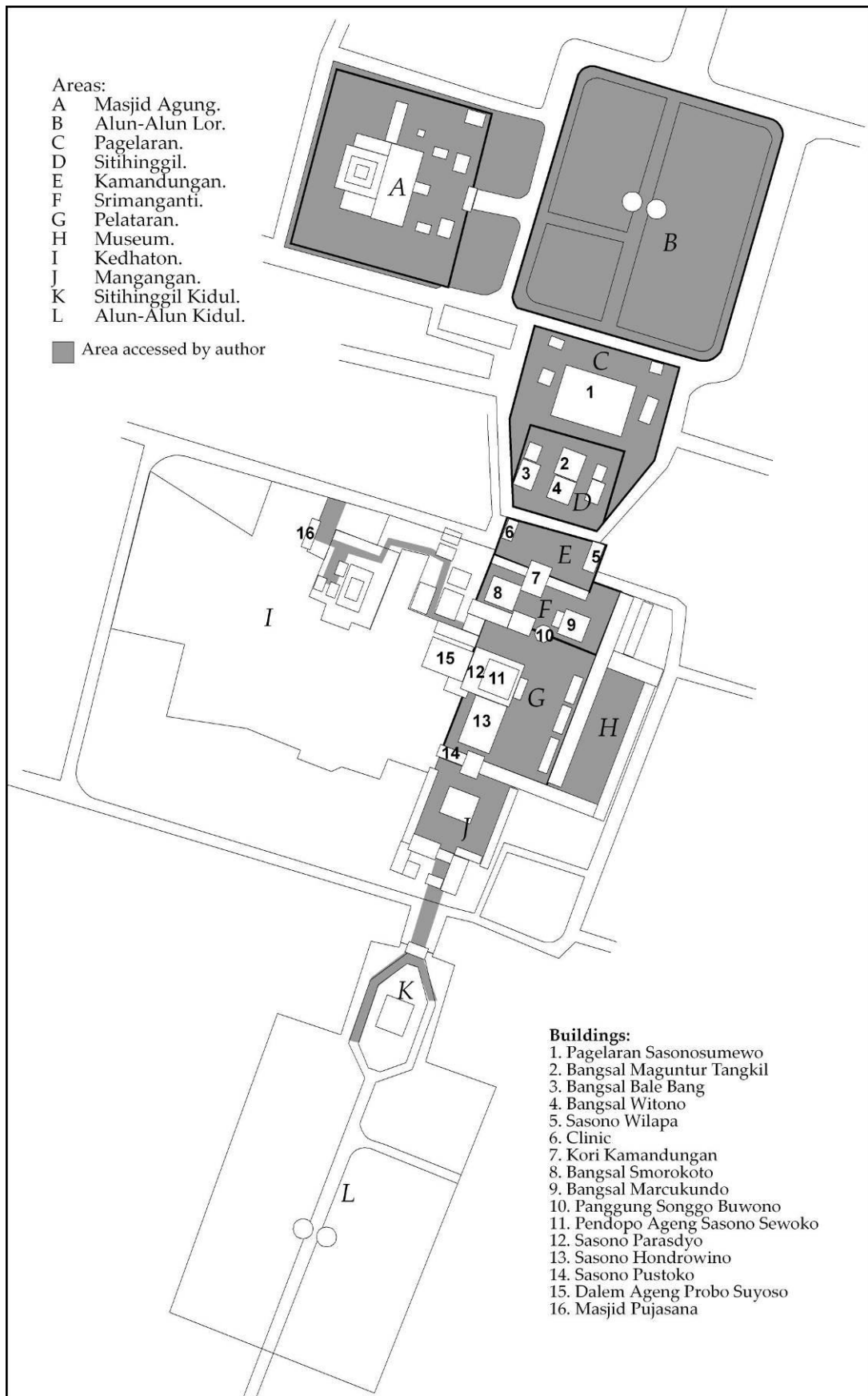
The *keraton* complex has not changed much, except for the fire which destroyed some of the most important buildings in 1985 and have remained the same for almost a century (and probably much longer).³¹ As all the rituals I described later would have references to specific places and spaces in the

³¹ Compare with Zimmerman (1919) and Behrend (1982) with Mimi (2005) and my description of the *keraton* complex.

keraton complex, some description of the layout would provide a sense of the the locations where parts of the rituals would take place.

The Kamandungan square (Area E in Map 3 and Fig. 4) would basically be a crossroad negotiating traffic from three directions. It has been enclosed by three gates and the Kori Kamandungan (#7) which would lead into the inner *keraton* complex. This would be the area where I would “sit and wait”; to observe the nuances of daily activities. From a vantage point, I could make sense of the likely scale of any ritual by counting the number of street vendors that would occupy the pavement northwest and northeast corner of the Kamandungan. At the northeast corner lies the office of the secretariat for all the *keraton* rituals (#5 and Fig. 5, lower left picture).

In Fig. 4, notice the signboard in the foreground whose arrow pointed towards the *Kawasan Wisata* (Tourist Area). This sign presented the *keraton* as a tourist attraction and the national colours decorating the palace showed its affiliation with the Republic of Indonesia. The office of the museum has been located on the southeast corner of the square. All tourists (local and foreign) would be directed to purchase their tickets there. From this office, visitors would be directed to walk eastward along the narrow road to the museum. I found it amusing that despite the signs and directions given by the staff at the museum office, there would still be visitors who would attempt to enter by way of the Kori Kamandungan (7).



Map 3

Map of the Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat. (Adapted from Miksic & Heins (Ed.) (2004), p. 89.)



Figure 4
The Kori Kamandungan decked with Indonesian national colours.



Figure 5
My sources of sustenance for my “sit and wait”- *sate kambing* (barbequed mutton), *bakso* (meatball soup) and tea.

The entrance into the *keraton* at the Kori Kamandungan has changed since 2004. Before the succession contest erupted, the entrance into the inner *keraton* was by way of the right-most doorway, which led directly to the Bangsal Smorokoto (#8). After the succession conflict erupted, the leftmost doorway became the main entry and exit point. This entrance was also enhanced with additional security personnel and sometimes accompanied by a police officer. One possible reason was that Bangsal Smorokoto was converted into an 'Operations Centre' during the height of the succession conflict. Hence, closing this door would ensure privacy for the princes who took turns to rest there. Furthermore, the current entrance on the left provided direct access to the courtyard of the Srimanganti (F).

North of the Kamandungan would be the Sitihinggil courtyard which contained buildings such as the Bangsal Maguntur Tangkil (#2) where PB-XIII Hangabehi ascended the throne; Bangsal Witono (#4) where *Nyai* Setomi is housed; and Bangsal Bale Bang (#3) where the *pusaka* gamelan sets are kept. South of the Srimanganti has been the Pelataran Kedhaton (G), the "heart of the karaton" (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:157).



Figure 6
The restoration of the Bangsal Marcukundo in progress.



Figure 7
Handing-over of restoration work. PB-XIII (right) and Mr. Lewis Emselem, US Deputy Chief of Mission cuts the string of jasmine jointly to officiate the successful restoration of Bangsal Marcukundo. (4 June 2005)

At the Srimanganti area would be the Bangsal Marcukundo (#9) and Bangsal Smorokoto. Bangsal Marcukundo was recently restored with the financial support from the Embassy of the United States (See Fig. 6). A handing-over ceremony was held on 4 June 2005 and officiated by PB-XIII and Mr. Lewis Emselem, the Deputy Chief of Mission of the United States Embassy (See Fig. 7).

The Kori Kamandungan has been the liminal space or ‘front-of-house’ of the *keraton*. From this point, all visitors were subjected to the rules and regulations about etiquette, dressing and protocol. Whoever entered the *keraton* here would have to remove their footwear if it did not cover their entire feet, especially the heel. Hence, visitors with sandals would have to remove them. It has also been the place where *abdidalem* (*keraton* courtiers or servants) and other authorised individuals who have business in the inner complex, would put on the *samir*. The *samir* is like a gold or yellow tie with red borders. It would be worn to ensure the ‘safety’ of the person. Considering that several *pusaka* have been scattered throughout the *keraton* complex, the *samir* would act as a protective shield in the event that the ‘aura’ of the *pusaka* proved ‘too strong’ for the person. In pragmatic terms, the *samir* served as an identification marker to distinguish between guests, visitors and *abdidalem* of the *keraton*. Hence, if anyone who did not wear a *samir* wandered into restricted areas, the security personnel would direct them accordingly.

In the Pelataran courtyard would be the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko (#11 of Map 3 and Fig. 8) where the *Bedhaya Ketawang* would be performed; the Sasono Hondrowino (#13) which has been an events hall; Sasono Pustoko (library, #14); and the entrance to the Dalem Ageng Pronosuyoso (#15), where the *pusaka* would be kept. Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko would be the furthest point that any visitor, unless authorised, would be allowed access. I would limit my coverage up to this area as this would be the start point for all the rituals that I observed. An important feature of the courtyard of the Pelataran would be its sand which was supposedly from the beaches of Parangtritis and Parang Kusumo – the gateways to the sea-kingdom of Ratu Kidul.



Figure 8
The Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko.



Figure 9
Strings of jasmine being placed on various artefacts found in the *keraton* complex.



Figure 10
Most of the statues and artefacts placed within the inner *keraton* complex are adorned with flowers.



Figure 11

The hall described by Zimmerman (1919) as having white marble flooring and the capacity to seat a thousand people.

Moving from the Kamandungan to the Pelataran, statues and weapons have been adorned with either strings of jasmine or a handful of flower petals (usually red, pink and white roses). In Fig. 9, a string of jasmine ‘accompanied’ the spear while in Fig. 10, a 9th Century statue of Kuwera, the God of Wealth³² was ‘offered’ a handful of flower petals. These flowers are routinely placed and replaced every Thursday. It could be seen as an act of ‘appeasement’ or a matter of “making the *keraton* smell good” (a contemporary rationalisation which did not sound convincing to me). Such ‘adornments’ could also be found ‘accompanying’ some artefacts in the *keraton*’s museum. Due to the belief that *pusaka* possessed ‘power’ and has

³² This statue was identified by my supervisor, Professor John Miksic.

been 'alive' with desires and temperament, 'appeasement' with 'offerings' has been a precautionary measure to ensure that the *pusaka* would not be agitated.

Back to the Kamandungan square, this open area would be the place where the observers would wait for the *pusaka* contingents to exit during the *Kirab Pusaka*. For the *Garebeg Mulud*, the crowd would gather and wait at the Pagelaran (C) and Alun-Alun Lor (B) areas. Hence, depending on the ritual, the extent and location of the main areas for ritual would vary.

Moving northwards, we would enter the Pagelaran area, where the huge audience hall, Pagelaran Sasonosumewo (#1) has been touted as having the capacity to seat a thousand people (Zimmerman, 1919). The Pagelaran Sasonosumewo would be the venue for the *Sekaten* fair. It was also the holding area for the *Kirab Nata Jumenengan* (royal progress), held on September 2005 to 'showcase' the new king to the 'people'. Proceeding northwards, we have the open square known as the Alun-Alun Lor. The Alun-Alun was previously occupied by street vendors who were later relocated into proper stalls skirting the Alun-Alun. The Alun-Alun Lor has been an empty space used for sporting and recreational activities. It would also be the venue for the fairs that would be held during *Garebeg Mulud*. Occasionally, this space would be occupied with other trade fairs and expositions. To the west of the Alun-Alun Lor would be the Masjid Agung (Grand Mosque, A) which would be the destination for the *gunungan* (rice mounts) for all the *Garebeg* rituals.

The description and orientation to the layout of the *keraton* complex has been given to provide some spatial referencing when I describe the flow of the rituals in the next Chapter. The spaces and places used by the rituals could be simply divided into two main areas – the inner and outer complex of the palace with the boundaries at the Kamandungan. Depending on how much space the rituals occupied in either the inner or outer complex, public exposure would be greatest for rituals which occupied more of the outer complex and beyond.

However, the limitations of access to spaces and places in the palace complex have been breached by the ‘coverage’ by journalists, television filming crews and students. Through the various media, such coverage has been framed within the interests of the respective newspapers, television networks or educational institutions. In some cases, as in the *Jumenengan* of PB-XIII on 10 September 2004, Metro TV was granted exclusive coverage of the activities taking place in the inner palace complex.

THE PHOENIX SPREADS ITS WINGS

Most of the buildings at the Pelataran and major parts of the Kedhaton were destroyed by fire in 1985. Among them were the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko, Sasono Hondrowino and Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso. Fortunately, most of the *pusaka* were saved. The timing of the fire seemed to coincide with the prophecy of Ronggowarsito that the *keraton* in Surakarta would not last

250 years (some say 240 years) (Pemberton, 1994:182; *Kompas*, 4 Feb 1985). By 1985, the *keraton* had existed for 240 years as it was established in 1745. This fire might have destroyed major parts of the *keraton* complex, but it was a *hikmah* (blessing) for the *keraton*. Like a phoenix rising from its own ashes, the *keraton* have shown signs or rejuvenation.

The first signs of rejuvenation probably came in the 1970s when the *keraton* hosted the wedding of PB-XII's oldest daughter in 1970; and when the *Kirab Pusaka* was introduced in 1974 (Pemberton, 1994:161-3; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:11). However, the dissolution of the cultural council, *Pawiyatan Kabudayan Keraton Surakarta* (PKKS) in 1973 and comments made in 1985 suggested that the *keraton* might have reduced most of its cultural activities (Bram *et al.*, 2001:152; *Kompas*, 12 Feb 1985). The condition of the *keraton* complex in 1985 and Ronggowarsito's prophecy probably convinced PB-XII that the fire marked the end of the *keraton*.

The second signs of rejuvenation came after the fire, with the establishment of the *Panitia Swasta Pembangunan Kembali Karaton Surakarta* (PSPKKS, Committee for the Rebuilding of Karaton Surakarta) to oversee the rebuilding of the damaged buildings (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:360). President Suharto facilitated fund-raising for the *keraton* by donating 10 million rupiah (*Tempo*, 16 Feb 1985:13; *Kompas*, 6 Feb 1985; *SM*, 6 Feb 1985).

Later in 1989, the PSPKKS was replaced by the *Badan Pengelola Keraton Kasunanan Surakarta* (BPKKS, Keraton Surakarta Management Board) which

was established by the Director-General for Tourism. BPKKS was formed to oversee the management of the *keraton* and developed its potential for tourism development (Sri, 2002:169). The efforts of the BPKKS were complemented by the revival of the *Pawiyatan Kabudayan* in 1990 as the *Yayasan Pawiyatan Kabudayan Karaton Surakarta* (Bram *et al.*, 2001:153). In recognition of the *keraton*'s role in the promotion of tourism, PB-XII was conferred the *Piagam Penghargaan Adikarya Pariwisata* in 1996 (Sri, 2002:169). Today, the *keraton* fully acknowledged its status as a 'cultural centre' (Wirabhumi, 2004:18)

CONTEMPORARY PERSUASIONS

In 1998, PB-XII envisioned the *keraton* as the *pengayom* (protector); *pengayem* (comforter or aegis) and unifying force of the society (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:370). However, the *keraton* has had to negotiate these roles as a cultural centre under the auspices of the Republic of Indonesia; and as the institution for the Kasunanan.

The Contest to be Pakubuwana XIII

When this thesis was written, there were two princes who had claimed to be Pakubuwana XIII. On 31 August 2004, the western part of the city heard the proclamation by *Gusti*³³ Tedjowulan that he has become PB-XIII. Ten days later, the same proclamation could be heard in the Keraton Surakarta

³³ The generic title for sons and daughters of a king is *Gusti*.

Hadiningrat as the eldest prince of the late PB-XII – *Gusti* Hangabehi – accessioned the throne.

The ensuing contest to be the Susuhunan (king) of Surakarta suggested that there could be reasons for being one, especially when a Colonel from the Indonesian Army was willing to give up his promising military career to be a king without a kingdom.³⁴ Furthermore, the fact that both princes were able to galvanise support for their respective bids to become PB-XIII showed that they wielded some degree of influence and support from segments of society in contemporary Java.

I learnt from my interactions with journalists covering the event and from reports, that most of PB-XIII Tedjowulan's supporters were from outside Solo, while support for PB-XIII Hangabehi were mainly local.³⁵ Interestingly, there were also suggestions that the extent of support threaded along affiliations with political parties. However, these observations need to be verified.

³⁴ It was reported that a formal complaint was submitted to the *Pengadilan Agama Solo* (Religious Court of Solo) for the fair disbursement of PB-XII's assets based on the Islamic inheritance laws (*faraid*). It was alleged that some princes were hoarding as much as Rp 20 billion (about S\$3.6 million). While this amount of money might be a motivating factor, the application of *faraid* will divide and distribute this wealth among the remaining two wives, 35 children, 75 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren of PB-XII. (*Tempo*, 17 Apr 2005)

When asked about his military career, PB-XIII Tedjo assured that, "Oh, itu bisa diatur!" (Oh, that can be arranged!). Ironically, Colonel Tedjowulan had to seek permission to return to Solo to ascend the throne. Nevertheless, PB-XII was a retired Lieutenant-General who was officially released from service in 1984. (*KR*, 31 Aug 2004).

³⁵ Compare with Mulyanto *et al.* (2004:147).



Figure 12

A banner for *Raja Rakyat* outside the villa in which *Gusti* Tedjowulan declared himself Paku Buwono XIII on 31 August 2004.



Figure 13

Accession to the throne at the *keraton*. *Gusti* Hangabehi sits on his throne after declaring himself Paku Buwono XIII following an earlier ceremony in which he was anointed the title of *Kangjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati Anom* (Crown Prince), on 10 September 2004.

In this climate of uncertainty, historical precedents were brought to the fore and debates about the legitimacy of each PB-XIII emerged (Mulyanto *et al.*, 2004). PB-XIII Tedjowulan projected himself as the *Raja Rakyat* (People's King, Fig. 4) and claimed legitimacy based on support from the *rakyat* (people) and three *Pengageng* (Ministers) of the *keraton* (KR, 31 Aug 04; KR, 1 Sep 04; Mulyanto *et al.*, 2004:125-8,147-152). His supporters had cited historical precedents in which the heirs to the throne were not the eldest prince.

In contrast, PB-XIII Hangabehi's claim was based on being the eldest prince; and a suspect decree from PB-XII that supported the eldest son's right to be the heir since no *Permaisuri* (Queen) was appointed (*Tempo*, 17 Apr 2005; KR, 23 Jul 2004).³⁶ Upon his demise on 11 Jun 2004, PB-XII had not appointed a *Permaisuri* from among his wives nor conferred the title of *Kangjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati Anom* (KGPA, Crown Prince) on any of his sons (KR, 3 Sep 2004; MI, 2 Sep 2004; JP, 2 Sep 2004).

³⁶. In **Karaton Surakarta**, it was mentioned that there was no eligible woman who could fulfil the strict conditions to be the *permaisuri*; and that PB XII was awaiting "guidance from God" with regards to appointing his heir. At the time of his death on 11 June 2004, he had not appointed an heir. Although **Karaton Surakarta** also states that when there is no *permaisuri*, the "rights to the throne fall to the first-born son", it is difficult to support this assertion considering that the book was published by PB-XIII Hangabehi's group after the death of PB-XII. Compare this assertion with Bram's *et al.* (2001) explanation for PB-XII's reluctance to designate an heir – he realised the wisdom of his mother's objection against appointing a *permaisuri* and conceded that the Keraton will benefit from a *Susuhunan* who can meet the challenges in the future. Designating an heir will limit the choice for the Keraton. (YP, 2004:16-17; Bram, *et al.*, 2001:118-9)

These claims led to questions about legitimacy and its corresponding aftermath – authority and leadership. An analysis of the arguments presented showed that the sources of legitimacy for being the Susuhunan had varied in the course of history. From my interactions, discussions about legitimacy tend to emphasise the possession of *wahyu* and *kewibawaan* (authoritative presence). In the past, the *keraton* rituals of the *Pasamuan Ageng* (Grand Gatherings) at the *keraton* commemorated the Susuhunan's legitimacy and maintained his aura of authority. These *keraton* rituals of the *Pasamuan Ageng* appeared to provide the same effects today.

PB-XIII Hangabehi could be presented to be more legitimate as his accession was conducted at the *keraton* complex and was graced by the *pusaka* dance – *Bedhaya Ketawang*. This sacred dance has been a fundamental legitimising element and could only be performed in the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko – the main audience hall in the inner sanctum of the *keraton*. This dance would link PB-XIII Hangabehi to Ratu Kidul and Panembahan Senapati. It also attested to the continuity of such a tradition since it was first performed under the reign of Sultan Agung (seventeenth century).

Up to this point, the succession conflict and its outcomes have revealed that the *keraton* could find some relevance and significance in contemporary Java. Firstly, the conflict (no matter how theatrical it might seem) showed the extent of the support base or sphere of influence for each of the contending PB-XIIIs. In both cases, their influences extended beyond Solo. From my

observations, the support for the contesting PB-XIII could have been derived from the pool of *keraton* sympathisers and supporters which grew over the years through the perpetuation of *keraton* rituals and their act of conferring titles, medals and awards.³⁷

Secondly, some *pusaka* have been a significant element in providing some degree of legitimacy. Thirdly, the ideas of legitimacy, authority and leadership would be varied and subjected to debates. Finally, the fact that a succession conflict emerged in contemporary Indonesia suggested that it could be still meaningful and viable to be a Susuhunan (king).

The *Keraton* as ‘Cultural Centre’

As a cultural centre, the *keraton* would be expected to fulfil its role as a promoter, developer and preserver of cultural resources. The *keraton* fulfilled this requirement with the Yayasan Pawiyatan Kabudayan as the cultural foundation which promoted the cultural resources of the *keraton* – *karawitan* (music), *pakeliran* (wayang kulit/ puppet theatre) and *bekso* (dance) and Javanese language.

Secondly, the close affiliation between becoming a ‘cultural centre’ and an ‘object of tourism’ (*obyek pariwisata*) meant that there must be some form

³⁷ In the aftermath of the fire in 1985, the Keraton received many visitors and the museum which provided access into the inner *keraton* complex raised the entry fee by Rp 100 to Rp 300 (SM, 12 Feb 1985; 15 Feb 1985). By 1999, the Keraton managed to retain about 500 *abdudalem* and prominent individuals were keen to be part of the *Kerabat* (Ari, 2004: 128,149-153; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:19).

of tourist attraction and the *keraton* rituals have been touted as such. In addition to the Yayasan Pawiyatan, the *keraton* operated a museum, which was established in 1963 and provided income through the collection of entry fees. The museum was recently renovated in 2004 with sponsorships from a number of corporations.

Even without attracting tourists, rituals such as *Kirab Pusaka* and *Tingalan Jumenengan* could increase the rate of hotel occupancy momentarily as members of the *keraton* from outside Solo attended these rituals. In 2004, I had difficulty finding accommodation as most rooms of affordable rates had been taken up. Other than an increase in hotel occupancy, the requirement for wearing the traditional attire during these *keraton* rituals provided income opportunities for bridal agencies and tailors who rented out such attire.

In addition to being a cultural centre and an 'object of tourism', the *keraton* has been considered as a living museum (Pemberton, 1994:166). In the *Manual of Museum Management*, a 'museum' has been defined as:

...not the buildings that house them, not even the collections they protect...Museums are complex cultural institutions uniquely concerned both with collecting and preserving the material cultural heritage, and at the same time communicating its meaning- whether that meaning arises from works of art, archaeological and historical artefacts or scientific specimens. The social and political dimensions of the communication of meaning result in an institution that combine those aspects with the 'hardware' functions of housing and caring for a collection.

(Lord and Lord, 1997:3)

Similarly, ICOM defined a museum as:

... a non-profit making, permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, and open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, material evidence of people and their environment...

(ICOM Statutes, Article 2, Para 1)

Given these two definitions, the *keraton* could be considered a 'living' museum in the sense that it possessed the qualities of a museum and that its collections of material cultural heritage and cultural resources have not been 'dead' artefacts. A number of the artefacts in the collections of the *keraton* have been conserated as *pusaka* and antiquated as they might be, have been continuously used for rituals and other functions. As I would elaborate later in Chapter 5, the manner in which the *keraton* managed its *pusaka* could be appreciated as more than museological practice as it not only concerned itself with collections management and the communication of meaning, but with the perpetuation of the idea that the *keraton* has relevance and significance in contemporary Java. Beyond the current trend of museological practice, the management of *pusaka* entailed the conduct of activities and rituals which continue to use the *pusaka* unlike museum artefacts in display cases. In this respect, the collections of the *keraton* continued to be part of the community in which it served and not separate from it, in time and space. Hence, the *keraton* could be considered as a 'living' museum.

The *keraton* might be conceived as many things in the past, but in the contemporary, it has been a 'cultural centre' since 1988 assigned to become tourist attractions. However, the *keraton*'s income would not be limited to the museum and other funding. The *keraton* has assets such as the spaces at the Alun-Alun Lor to host events such as the *Sekaten* and other fairs, exhibitions and expositions; and retail spaces around the main square to rent. Despite being reduced to a cultural centre, a tourist attraction and 'living' museum, the *keraton* seemed to have taken advantage of the situation as they could continue the conduct of their *Pasamuhan Ageng* (Grand Gatherings) which served to strengthened their position, relevance and significance.

The Aristocrats as 'Public Personalities'

Observers such as van Klinken (2006; 2004) and Tick (2004) have shown that there has been an increase in the number of aristocrats offering themselves as candidates in political elections. The role of the *keraton* and other forms of royal institutions were debated in the 4th *Dialog Budaya* held in Yogyakarta from 28 to 29 September 2004. Some of the possibilities proposed at the dialogue were for members of the various aristocracies to become politically active on an individual basis; for the *keraton* to be an enterprise focusing on cultural tourism; and for the *keraton* to be part of civil society advocating issues for the people.

Nurcholish (2001) observed that individuals would be judged more on their credentials and contributions to society than on their status or position in a hierarchical society. The challenge for the aristocrats would be to ensure that its members possessed the credentials to be in their positions or they would no longer enjoy their privileged positions (Nurcholish, 2001). Nurcholish (2001) also advocated that Indonesians should not accept leaders based on their genealogy, ethnicity and personalities. Rather, their selection should be based on ethics, morality and universal credentials.

Genealogy seemed to be an important resource for aspiring politicians. In the election campaigns that I have observed, candidates tend to portray their genealogies graphically on posters and other printed media. For example, most of Megawati's campaign posters would include the image of her late father, Sukarno, the founding President of Indonesia. Similarly, candidates from the various *keraton* would take advantage of their own royal genealogies. However, they need not rely so much on images. The inclusion of their titles alone would be suggestive of their genealogies.

As public personalities, the aristocrats rely on their titles and genealogy to bolster their 'legitimacy' to be leaders in society (van Klinken, 2006). However, with the shift from a monarchical system to a democracy, they could no longer rely solely on past conceptions of legitimacy. However, it did not mean that the past ideas of legitimacy had become obsolete. It could merely be re-interpreted. Nevertheless, the aristocrats could no longer use the

keraton as a platform for political aspirations. However, they continued to rely on the aura of legitimacy that their genealogy provided them, but such strategies did not seem to work as election results have shown that being an aristocrat have not guaranteed victory at the polls.

In *Gusti* Dipokusumo's case, he was not elected as the Deputy Mayor for Solo. *Gusti* Dipo favoured his elder brother, PB-XIII Tedjowulan but later appeared to have become neutral. The victory at the election was won by candidates who have been 'supported' by PB-XIII Hangabehi's group as reflected by the presence of their campaign banner at the Kamandungan area, while the rest of the Baluwarti area had *Gusti* Dipokusumo's banner.

When the aristocrats become public personalities with political aspirations, the *keraton* no longer represent or would be represented by the aristocrats. Aristocrats have been encouraged to participate in politics on their individual basis and that they do not have access to the reservoir of powers contained in the *keraton*. Hence, it would be suggestive that the links between the *keraton* and the Kasunanan had been weakened.

Based on ideas from the past, the *keraton* could be ideally appreciated as an entity which embodied the *wahyu*; the seat of authority; the institution of kingship and the aristocracy; and the 'residence of the king'. Today, the *keraton* is no longer the capital or the centre of a *negara*. The current situation of the *keraton* has been far from the ideal and Kepres No. 23/88 has

institutionalised the *keraton* into (1) the Susuhunan (king); (2) the Kasunanan Surakarta (aristocracy) and (3) the *keraton* assets (including the *keraton* complex). The *keraton* has been reduced to being a 'cultural centre' and 'tourist attraction' with the Susuhunan considered as the head of the Kasunanan and that his 'powers' confined within the walls of the *keraton* complex and in *keraton* rituals. Yet, a contest to be PB-XIII emerged and suggested that it would still be viable to be king.

The *keraton*, which was once an institution for the Kasunanan, could no longer provide aspiring politicians among them the 'charisma' that they needed. Despite these deviations, the very fact that all efforts have been directed towards meeting ideals (usually through rituals and *pusaka*) such as *toto tentrem* and *kawula-gusti*, the *keraton* has yet to lose its essence. These underlying purposes of the Susuhunan and the *keraton* could be one of the motivating factors for someone to be the king and continue performing the annual *keraton* rituals.

Putu (1999:47) has advocated for the consideration of cultural heritage to be managed as 'performances' so that "ancient lifeless objects [can be made] into a more enjoyable and understandable display". The *keraton* seemed to have accomplished this readily and in Chapter 4, I would show how the performance of such rituals have ensured the preservation of cultural resources, thereby affirming Putu's (1999:46) assertion that performances would be the "vehicle by which inheritance is transmitter".

RITUAL

The Annual Pasamuan Ageng

The Central Javanese courts, now without most of their territories, became ritual establishments and generally docile clients of the Dutch...

(Ricklefs, 1993:118)

Ricklefs' (1993) description of the state of the *keraton* in 1830 could easily refer to the current situation and 'Dutch' could be replaced with 'Indonesian government' to reflect the *keraton*'s current status. The *keraton* has lost its territories and had appeared to rely on their rituals to project their significance and relevance as a cultural centre and tourist attraction. However, the rituals that constituted the *Pasamuan Ageng* were not only a *wadah* (container) for the preservation of cultural resources; it is a performance for the consolidation of power or a show of the *keraton*'s capacity to possess 'power'.

RITUALS OF THE KERATON

Keraton rituals form part of the "magical and religious implementation of kingship" by providing the necessary glorification of the Susuhunan, although it was not included as such by Soemarsaid (1981). The *Pasamuan*

Ageng has been the most formal displays of the grandeur and spiritual potency of the *keraton*. There would be about eight of these rituals annually (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:282-3, 354). Other than *Pasamuan Ageng*, the *keraton* has two other types of meetings, which involved a limited audience – *Pasamuan Tengahan* (Intermediate Gatherings) and *Pasamuan Alit* (Small Gatherings). *Pasamuan Tengahan* included ceremonies and events like the Susuhunan's birthday and family gatherings. *Pasamuan Alit* would usually be informal and involved pre-determined audiences with the Susuhunan (*Ibid.*:282).

The aim of the *Pasamuan Ageng* and other rituals has been to ensure that the ideal of *toto tentrem* (cosmic harmony) would be maintained. In the Javanese worldview the world that we live in constituted the micro-cosmos and that the macro-cosmos would be the vast universe. In this respect, harmony would be achieved when there has been alignment and synchronisation between the micro- and macro-cosmos (*Ibid.*:272). Behrend (1982:242-243) suggested that *toto tentrem* would be partly achieved through the architecture of the *keraton* and that the conduct of specific rituals and the possession of certain *pusaka* would ensure complete fulfilment. However, the efficacy of the architecture, rituals and *pusaka* combined has been dependent on the legitimacy and authority of the Susuhunan (king).

Keraton rituals have not been merely for the maintenance of *toto tentrem*. Through the performance of these rituals, participants would aspire

to achieve the three stages of spiritual development – *wareso* (power), *hamiseso* (to master) and ultimately, *wicaksono* (wisdom) (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:272). Hence, participation in the *keraton* rituals could be considered as practices which might increase an individual's reservoir of *kesaktian* and with the *keraton's pusaka* being the “most sacred”, it would make the *keraton* rituals significant to those who have intentions to accumulate such “powers”.

THE PASAMUAN AGENG

Although there have been about eight *keraton* rituals classified as *Pasamuan Ageng*, I would present only three of these rituals. This decision was based on pragmatic possibilities for scheduling and my perceived importance of these rituals. Hence, the choice of these rituals represented one of my biases which have affected the conclusions and findings that I have made. Aside from these three rituals, I have observed the *Mahesa Lawung* in 2005. However, my appreciation of *Mahesa Lawung* came much later and with no prior experience with this ritual (as compared to the others) I have chosen to omit a discussion on this ritual.

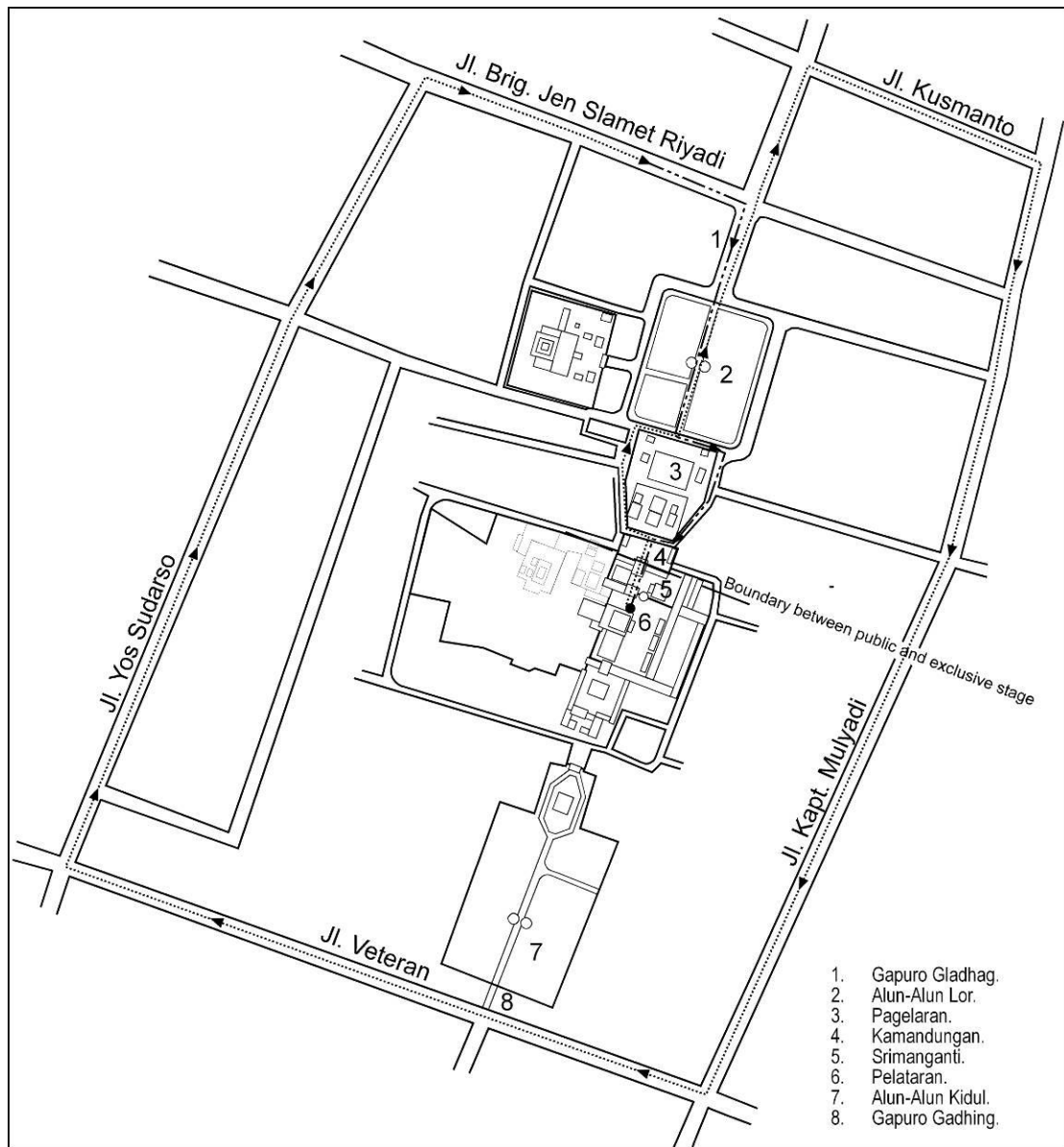
***Kirab Pusaka*: 1st Suro (22 February 2004, 9 February 2005)**

Kirab Pusaka would be the first ritual on the calendar and would begin on the eve of the Javanese New Year. In this ritual, the *keraton's pusaka*, or sacred heirlooms, would be carried in a procession circumambulating the

keraton complex in a clockwise direction so that the *keraton* complex would always be on the right side of the *pusaka* and its contingent. Behrend (1982:189) noted that this *pradaksina* – ritual circumambulation in a clockwise direction – emphasised the position of the *keraton* as a “sacred space” and the “axis mundi”. The route taken by the procession was the same in the late 1980s, 2004 and 2005 (See Map 4).

Between the late 1980s and early 1990s, I have had the opportunity to be one of the carriers of a *pusaka*. My participation was made possible by a complex relationship I had with the *keraton*. More than a decade later in 2004, I was there as a participant-observer, attempting to document this event as a researcher. This shifting of identity did not adequately remove me as an objective participant-observer as I would at times be emotionally and probably spiritually involved in the events.

In January 2004, I arrived in Solo a few days earlier to make the necessary preparations and be formally introduced to *Kangjeng* Eddy Wirabhumi who would become my main contact and part of the ‘authority’ to allow me access to the *keraton* – its rituals, ceremonies and celebrations. Overtime, I would address him as Pak Eddy. As I was not yet familiar with Pak Eddy, I sought the assistance of a ‘relative’ (who has become a ‘sister’ to me) to be the mediator. She has a member of the *keraton* and daughter to the late *Juru Kunci* of the Royal Cemetery in Imogiri. Her mother was PB-XII’s personal nurse.



Map 4
Map of route for Kirab Pusaka.

On the day of the ritual – Saturday, 21 February 2004 – I reported to the *keraton* early in the morning, accompanied by my ‘sister’ who was instructed to take me to the administrative office at the Magangan. It was the first time that I went beyond the Pelataran area. That same morning, I was issued with a letter that provided me access to the library – Sasono Pustoko – and approval to speak to members of the *keraton* about my research.

Most of the work that morning involved preparing food packets at the kitchen for the more than a thousand participants. The scene at the kitchen reminded me of Malay weddings in Singapore.³⁸ For some, catering food was a luxury and we relied on our network of relatives and friends to cook for the wedding feasts. There could be as many as a thousand guests attending such a wedding. Due to the large guest list, Malays in Singapore would use the word '*tabur*' (scatter) rather than '*hantar*' (send) when referring to 'sending' invitations. The range of bustling activities in the *keraton's* kitchen was familiar but the scale was much greater. The operations at the kitchen were divided into sections dedicated to steaming rice; preparing the ingredients for the dishes, the cooking proper and the packing of the food into boxes (Fig. 14-17). It was a systematic and organised way of preparing food for more than a thousand participants.

The preparations in the kitchen were part of a larger logistics operation necessary for the efficient and effective conduct of *Kirab Pusaka*. From my experiences with preparations for a wedding feast and managing a restaurant, I know that preparing food for such a scale would not be an easy task. Preparations have to begin early but not too early, so that the food would still be palatable when it was due for consumption in the evening, which was

³⁸ At this point, some might wonder about my comparison to a Malay wedding in Singapore. This comparison was meant to provide Malay Singaporeans a sense of the scale and atmosphere of the food preparations of the ritual. It might not make sense to those who would not be familiar with Malay weddings in Singapore, but it would provide the necessary "image" for those who would be familiar. In another perspective, it would be my way of revealing my shifting identities in observing the rituals.

about six to seven hours away. The bustling scene at the kitchen was a common sight at the *keraton*. Throughout the day at the *keraton*, I would see *abdidalem* (*keraton* courtiers or servants) in various employments, from the routine cleaning to the occasional restoration works like painting, repairing and so on. These loyal service in the 'backstage' with no expectations of prestige reminded me of the Javanese saying – *sepi ing pamrih, rame ing gaweh* ('quiet in ambition, active in conduct').



Figure 14
Food preparations at one
of the kitchens.



Figure 15

Steaming rice. *Abdidalem* wearing samir, steaming rice at the makeshift kitchen, a temporary extension of the kitchen.



Figure 16

The food packing area. At the background are cabinets filled with glasses embossed with the *keraton's* insignia. However, it is not used for the *Kirab Pusaka*.



Figure 17
Baskets of eggs and crackers for the food box.

Coincidentally, a forum on “Kraton Surakarta, Masa Depan dan Era Globalisasi” (Kraton Surakarta, Its Future and the Globalisation Era) was held at the Sasono Hondrowino. I missed much as the forum had started several hours earlier, but was in time to learn of new developments and interests on the re-conceptualisation of ‘*ratu*’ (kingship/leadership); the role of the *keraton* in the *ekonomi rakyat* (peoples’ economy); and the position of the *keraton* as an *obyek parawisata* (tourist attraction). The forum was interesting not so much in its timing, but in its content which seemed to suggest that the *keraton* has been aspiring to move beyond the designated ‘cultural centre’. Up to this day, I have always perceived the *keraton* as a ‘cultural centre’ (which was confirmed by the *keraton*) as I was under the impression that the *keraton* has no other role

in contemporary Java. This forum developed my interest in investigating the significance and aspiration of the *keraton* beyond being a 'cultural centre'.

When the forum ended, I was informed that I had to be in traditional attire for the *Kirab*. In my attempts to rent a set, I realised that several sets have been rented out to those who would participate in the ritual. When I returned to the hotel to prepare myself for the night, I saw several people dressed in the traditional attire, waiting outside their rooms. Getting rooms for that night had been a difficult task as most rooms were booked by participants of both the *Kirab Budaya* (Cultural Parade) and *Kirab Pusaka*.³⁹ The difficulty I had in securing an accommodation and costume suggested that the *Kirab Pusaka* had provided economic opportunities for the hotels and boutiques, thereby contributing to the local economy.

I made my way to the *keraton* just after *Maghrib* (dusk). Going into the inner *keraton* complex was easy as I was 'handed-over' to a 'relative', who has been a member of the *keraton*. Once inside, I was left on my own. At the Pelataran, I felt a different atmosphere from my earlier experiences with the *Kirab* in the 1980s. During then, everyone who entered the inner *keraton* complex was ushered to designated seating areas and everyone remained

³⁹ *Kirab Budaya* commemorated the founding of Solo city and has been intended to re-enact the move from Kartasura to Surakarta. However, this event brought much controversy, as the position of the Keraton has been displaced and members of the Keraton had voiced their displeasure with the Solo City council for the lack of acknowledgement with regard to the position of the Keraton in the founding of Solo City. I was slightly confused in the week before 21 February 2004, as I had initially thought that the banners and posters referring to the *Kirab Budaya* were synonymous with the *Kirab Pusaka*. Hence, I did not plan an observation of the *Kirab Budaya*. However, I manage to do so in 2005.

seated until the formation of the *pusaka* contingents. Fortunately for me (as I am not that comfortable with sitting cross-legged for long periods of time), it was rather informal this time (Fig. 18) and everyone stood in groups informally. In addition, there was also a tent, which provided complimentary *jamu* (traditional herb) beverage. One of the sponsors, *Nyonya Meneer* (a traditional herb (*jamu*) brand), had provided complimentary tonic drinks.



Figure 18

Waiting at the Pelataran. Members of the *keraton* waiting informally at the Pelataran in 2004. Most of them had been there since sunset.

What struck me most in 2004 was not only the change in atmosphere, but the respect for the Pelataran, which used to command decorum within its boundaries as the ground was said to have been filled with sand from the beaches of Parangtritis – entrance to the realm of the Ratu Kidul. Plastic cups littered the floor while rubbish bins stayed empty nearby (See Fig. 19). The

Pelataran no longer seemed to be the 'sacred' space that I was used to. As it was still several hours to the commencement of the *Kirab*, I sat and waited till about an hour to midnight, when activities began to pick up.



Figure 19
The Nonya Meneer booth at the Pelataran. (2004)

Each *pusaka*, depending on its size, would be carried by nominated *sentono dalem* (the ruler's relatives) and *abdidalem* (retainers). The names of the nominees were not announced until close to midnight. A veil of secrecy surrounded the list, as no one dared reveal its contents again after the *Kirab*. The designated carriers were grouped into as many groups corresponding to the number of *pusaka* to be carried for the *Kirab*. In 2005, there were about thirteen. I could not get confirmation of the number of *pusaka* in 2004, and no one seemed to be prepared to confirm them with me for fear of

“repercussions”. When the names for the various *pusaka* contingents were announced, two rows of *abdidalem* were formed to ensure a clear path for the contingents to move out of the Pelataran.

As each contingent was formed, the *pusaka* was brought out from the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso and handed over to the nominated carriers at the Sasono Parasdyo. Then, the carriers move out of the Sasono Parasdyo and waited for the contingents to form up. It seemed that only the Susuhunan and the female *abdidalem* would be allowed to enter the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso.

According to Surjandjari (1996), these *pusaka* included artefacts from the Majapahit, Demak, and Pajang, up to the Kartasura era. Due to the sacredness and potency of the *pusaka*, they have been veiled in velvet cloth, but the large and bulky items were not. However, all of them were richly decorated with jasmine and accompanied by an incense burner at the front and ceremonial parasols were held over them as a symbol of honour, reverence and protection. That was the only way in which the public could identify the *pusaka*. The *pusaka*’s capacity for action has been represented in this ceremony. By bringing them out of the *keraton* and into the public domain, the powers of the *keraton*’s *pusaka* were being disseminated bringing safety and prosperity to the people outside the *keraton* walls.

As the contingents move out of the Sasono Parasdyo, *abdidalem* of each of the carriers form up behind their respective patrons. Over time, the people remaining were those who chose not to follow the *Kirab*. In 2004, I stayed behind, as I could not get out due to the congestion at the doorways. By the time the last contingent was out at about 12.45 a.m., I decided to observe the activities or inactivity at the Pelataran. In 2005, I followed the procession out of the *keraton* complex.

While the *Kirab* contingents were out of the Pelataran, a small group was seated facing the Panggung Songgo Buwono. This tower has been designated as the meeting place between the Susuhunan and Ratu Kidul. Their posture and the presence of an incense burner and some possible 'offerings' suggested that some form of prayer or 'consultation' might be taking place.

At almost four in the morning, the first contingent entered the Pelataran. Unlike the orderly and stoic manner at the start of the *Kirab*, carriers were rushing in to hand-over the *pusaka* at the Sasono Parasdyo. The procedure was much faster than at the start of the *Kirab*. It was obvious that the carriers and everyone else were worn out by the ritual. As soon as all the *pusaka* were returned to the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso, a set of *wilujengan* (thanksgiving) 'offerings' were placed at the Sasono Parasdyo. This was followed by a gathering of the *sentono dalem* (princes) and the commencement of a *slametan*. As usual, Islamic prayers were recited and at the end, the

wilujengan offerings were distributed among those present. Later, the flowers used to adorn the *pusaka* in the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso were brought out and there was a group of *abdidalem* waiting to get a bunch of these flowers. I joined in the foray and got myself a handful which I later gave to my mother. The conduct of the *slametan* was not mentioned in Surjandjari's (1996) description of the *Kirab*, but it was conducted as part of the ritual in 2004 and 2005.

By day-break, the ritual was over. There was no fanfare or call for encore. There was no ceremony to mark the end of the ritual. The ritual ended arbitrarily and faded as the number of people in the Pelataran diminished and the morning 'ritual' of cleaning the *keraton* complex commenced.



Figure 20

The first *pusaka* for *Kirab* *Pusaka* will always be the sacred text which carries the Islamic declaration of faith- the *Kalimat Syahadat*. This contingent will be reserved for the highest ranking *sentono dalem*. In this picture, *Gusti Haryo Mataram* was the first carrier. He was also the first carrier for the *Kirab* in 2005. *Gusti Dipo* is on the left in the foreground. (22 February 2004)



Figure 21

Sesajen for Kirab Pusaka. The abdidalem lays out the sesajen at the main entrance to the inner complex of the keraton. This signals to the public that the Kirab will begin soon. Following this, the albino buffaloes (kebo bule), will appear and position themselves at the Kamandungan main square. (2005)

In 2005, I followed the procession out of the *keraton* complex and walked with the herd of *kebo bule* (albino buffaloes) at the front of the procession. Although the lead *pusaka* from inside the *keraton* has been an inscription of the *Kalimat Sahadat*⁴⁰ (Fig. 20) – the Islamic declaration of faith – the lead *pusaka* of the procession was the herd of *kebo bule*, known collectively as *Kyahi Slamet*. The addition of *Kyahi Slamet* to the procession could be traced to PB-X's practice to have the *kebo bule* circumambulate the Keraton complex in the Baluwarti area whenever there was an epidemic or natural

⁴⁰ The Islamic declaration of faith: "There is no God but Allah; and Muhammad is the Prophet/ Messenger".

disaster (Surjandjari, 1996:8). While it has been proclaimed that *Kyahi* Slamet would move on their own accord without human intervention (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:301), the herd would have very little option for deviation as the crowd lined along the usual route in great numbers and created a 'tunnel'. Siegel (1986) also made the same observation during a *Kirab* in 1981:

As usual, the streets were lined with those who hoped to profit from contiguity with the magical implements, many if not most of whom had walked in from the countryside, often for miles.

(Siegel, 1986:35)

Interestingly, when *Kyahi* Slamet wanted to move freely, they were begged to remain on the designated path. This occurred towards the end of the procession in 2005. When the herd reached the entrance to the roadway known as Supit Urang (a road which cuts between the Sitihinggil and Kamandungan), they had a choice of entering the roadway by moving south or move east on a road along the northeast walls of the *keraton*. The herd had showed signs of moving eastwards, which would prolong the procession. However, after much 'begging', the herd decided to move towards the Kamandungan.

In 2005, the beverage stall was no longer at the Pelataran, but situated at the Kamandungan and the booth was distributing Indonesia's Red Bull isotonic beverage – *Kratindaeng*. While waiting for the *Kirab* to commence, most of the *abdidalem* were seated in an orderly manner at the sides of the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko (Fig. 22). The entrance to the inner *keraton* at

the Kamandungan had enhanced security with barriers placed to cordon the area. The *keraton* employed the support of the Tourist Police, the local scouting groups, and *silat* associations to prepare the crowd to make space for the *kebo bule* and the path for the *Kirab* contingents to move out. In addition, there were also security inspections on anyone entering the inner *keraton* (Fig. 29). Security became a primary concern in 2005 due to the tension between the two contending PB-XIII.



Figure 22

Waiting at the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko. Higher ranking *abdudalem*, waiting for the announcement of the carriers for the night. (2005)



Figure 23

At the gates. *Abdidalem* begin to throng in numbers into the *keraton* soon after the sun sets, perhaps following the evening prayers. These *abdidalem* came in buses from areas outside the main Solo city. (2005)



Figure 24

The *Kamandungan* at close to midnight. (2005)



Figure 25

Garebeg Mulud procession leaves Kamandungan. The procession bearing the *gunungan* moves out of the *keraton* inner complex. The *gunungan* comes in a set of a pair of large *gunungan* and two smaller ones. The procession moves towards the Masjid Agung.

Garebeg Mulud (Sekaten): 12th Mulud (1 May 2004, 21 April 2005)

Garebeg refers to the celebration of the three major Islamic festivals held annually. *Garebeg Mulud*, the grandest of the three, commemorated Prophet Mohammed's birthday. The other two *Garebeg* celebrated the end of the fasting month (*Garebeg Poso*) and the Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca (*Garebeg Besar*). As with all *Garebeg*, a procession bearing the *gunungan*⁴¹ - a rice-mound symbolising fertility and prosperity – moved out of the inner complex of the *keraton* towards the Masjid Agung, passing through the main audience hall,

⁴¹ For more description about the *gunungan*, refer to Appendix 3.

Pagelaran Sasonosumewo and crossing the northern main square, *Alun-Alun Lor*. For *Garebeg Mulud*, this procession took place on 12 Mulud which coincided with 1 May 2004 and 21 April 2005.

On his first visit to Yogyakarta, Woodward (1989:2-3) witnessed the *Garebeg Mulud* at Keraton Ngayogyakarta and embarked on his appreciation of Islam in Java and asserting that the *keraton* has been based on a Sufi theocracy. Pemberton (1998:97) considered the *Garebeg Mulud* as the “height of [the Susuhunan’s] ceremonial cycle”. Hence, the *Garebeg* has been observed by others and proved to be an important ritual for observation.

Since 2004, there were eight pairs of *gunungan*. Usually, the *keraton* would prepare one pair. The additional seven sets of *gunungan* were sponsored by six *Kabupaten* affiliated to the ‘kingdom’ of Surakarta and the *Kotamadya* of Solo. Each of the *gunungan* set from the *Kabupaten* bore their emblems in 2004. In 2005, these *gunungan* did not bear their emblems. Instead, all of them bore the emblem of PB XIII. I see this as an attempt to establish the *keraton*’s position among the *rakyat* (people) as well as to affirm PB XIII Hangabehi’s reign.

Garebeg Mulud would last a week culminating in the procession. During the week, a fair would be held at the northern great square, *Alun-Alun Lor* and the main audience hall, *Pagelaran Sasonosumewo*. This fair has been known as the *Sekaten*, the popular name for *Garebeg Mulud* due to the prominence of two gamelan sets which have been revered as *pusaka* – *Kyahi*

Guntur Madu and *Kyahi Guntur Sari*.⁴² This fair has had the aim to attract people from outside the city to come and congregate at the *keraton*. As the Masjid Agung would be to the immediate west of the Alun-Alun Lor, the fair would bring crowds who could be enticed to attend events at the mosque. Religious sermons were conducted at the mosque during this period and it was one way to spread Islamic teachings to the large crowds that gathered. The eastern courtyard of the mosque was also filled with vendors (Fig. 26). The front (eastern) lawn of the mosque became a bazaar area with numerous stalls and the congregation of beggars.

Entry into the fair grounds (Fig. 27) was complimentary while the entry into the sector at the Pagelaran costs Rp500 (Less than 10 cents in Singapore currency). At the fair, there were rides such as Ferris Wheels and stunt events which involved a motorcyclist riding swiftly within a large barrel to gain adequate speed so that the motorcycle rides on the walls of the barrel (Fig. 28). Such attractions were simply meant to provide entertainment and fun.

⁴² *Sekaten* refers to the gamelan that is played during the *Grebeg Mulud*. On the fifth day of the month of Mulud or seven days before the procession, two *pusaka* gamelan sets are brought to the Great Mosque- the *Kyahi Guntur Madu* is placed at the southern pavilion whilst the *Kyahi Guntur Sari* is located at the northern pavilion. These pavilions are at the eastern courtyard of the mosque which is its entrance. These *Gamelan Sekaten* sets and the music they play represent the two parts of the Islamic declaration of faith- "There is no God, but Allah; and Muhammad is the Messenger/Prophet". For seven days, the gamelan sets are played alternately with only breaks during the call to prayers which are held five times a day. The gamelan plays a tune quite different from the usual. (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:306-9)



Figure 26

Bazaar at Masjid Agung. Peddlars at the compound of the Grand Mosque, in between the two pavilions which housed the *Gamelan Sekaten*: *Kyahi Guntur Madu* and *Kyahi Guntur Sari*.



Figure 27

Fair grounds at Alun-Alun Lor. Joy rides, games and food stalls have become a feature in the *Sekaten* fair. (20 April 2005)



Figure 28
The daredevil rider.



Figure 29
Entrance to the Pagelaran sector. Information counter and entrance to the main Sekaten fair at the Pagelaran Sasonosumewo (20 April 2005)

Visitors to the *Pagelaran* sector (Fig. 35) would walk through a maze created from the layout of the stalls inside. Banners with religious messages were hung every 10 metres. These banners reminded visitors of their religious obligations. In Fig. 30, the banners bore the logos of the *keraton* and the Religious Department of Surakarta, thereby indicating the link between the *keraton* and religious authority. This particular banner reminded visitors that “Prayers are the pillars of religion”. The banners were alternately in Indonesian and Javanese. The relationship between Islam and the *keraton* has been a fundamental one. Given that the Susuhunan bore the title of *Ngabdurahman Sayidin Panotogomo* (Leader of the Faith), he would be considered as the care-taker and custodian of Islam.⁴³ This joint venture between the *keraton* and the local religious authority would provide some form of relevance and significance for the *keraton* in the promotion of Islam. Hence, this aspect of the ritual would have ensured a role for the *keraton* in contemporary Java.

⁴³ The complete title for the Susuhunan has been *Sampeyan Dalem Ingkang Sinuhun Kangjeng Susuhunan (SISKS) Paku Buwono, Senopati Ing Ngalogo Ngabdurahman Sayidin Panotogomo Ingkang Kapling XII (or XIII). Senopati Ing Ngalogo* could be interpreted as “Commander-in-Chief”. (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:14)



Figure 30
Religious banners. Banners at the fair reminding visitors of their religious obligations. (20 April 2005)



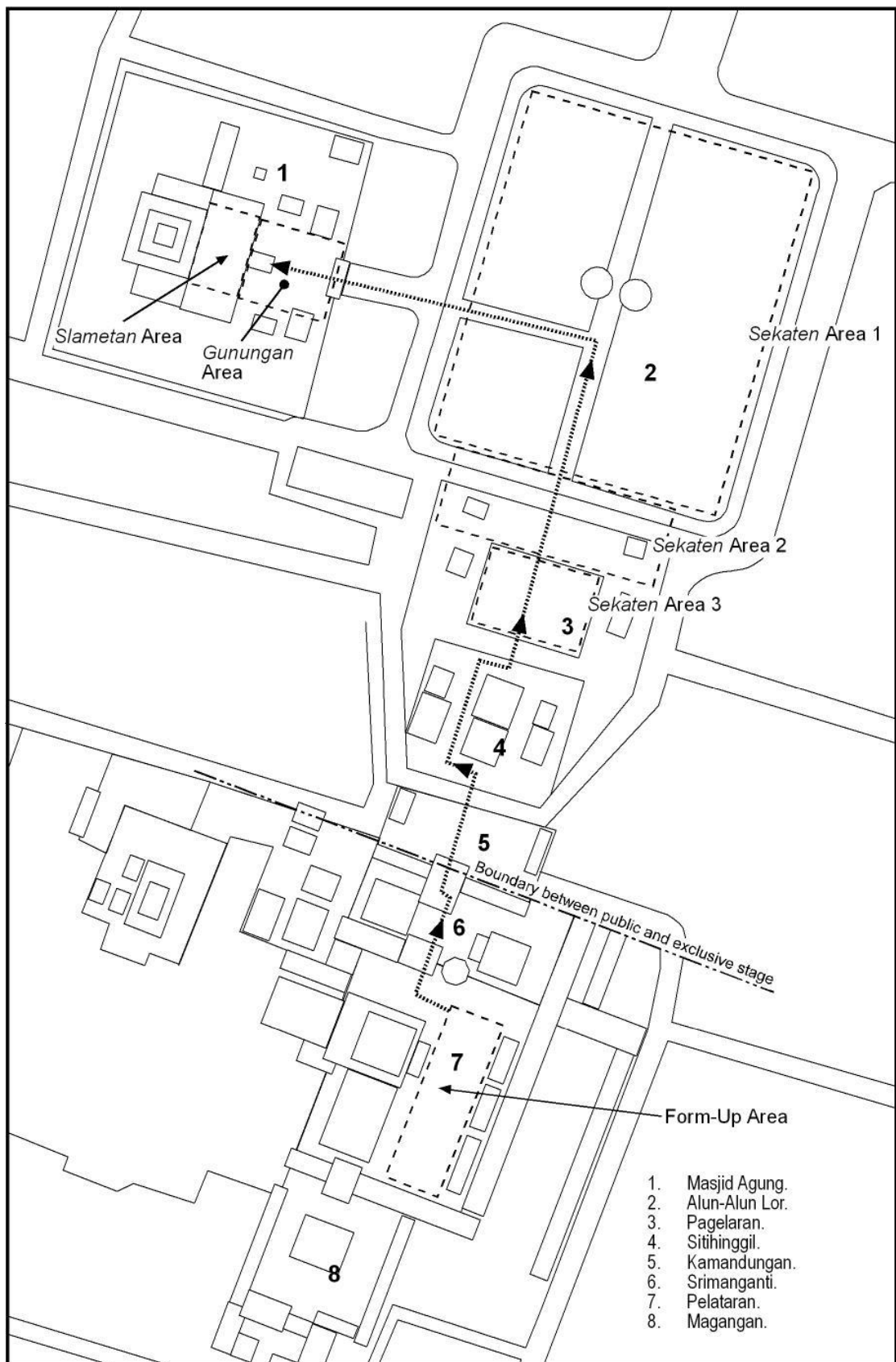
Figure 31
The *Canthang Balung* characters leading the *Garabeg* procession.



Figure 32
Crowd at the Pagelaran. (21 Apr 2005).



Figure 33
The *wilujengan* offerings follow the *gunungan*. (21 April 2005)



Map 5
Route for Garebeg Mulud.

On the day of the procession, from as early as eight o'clock in the morning, the designated path for the procession would be cleared. Similar to *Kirab Pusaka*, crowd gathered along the pathway (Fig. 32). However, most of the crowd had stationed themselves at the mosque. As with the *Kirab Pusaka*, the local scouting groups and other volunteers assisted in keeping the crowds at the side of the pathway so that the procession could move unhindered (Fig. 33). When the procession arrived at the mosque, the 'offerings' were placed in the mosque with a pair of *gunungan* placed at the entrance of the mosque proper (Fig. 35). Every *gunungan* placed inside the mosque courtyard was surrounded and guarded to prevent the crowd from reaching for parts of the *gunungan*.

When all the 'offerings' have been placed in the mosque, the *slametan* could start. About five minutes into the prayers, the crowd began to scramble for parts of the *gunungan*. The one sponsored by the *keraton* was spared momentarily, but it was taken apart before the prayers were even completed. *Abdidalem* guarding the *gunungan* got into the scramble as soon as it started, ripping parts of the *gunungan* and throwing them into the crowd so that those who were far away need not rush towards the *gunungan*. Some went home with scraps of the *gunungan* they picked up from ground.



Figure 34

Slametan at Masjid Agung. The banner designated the *Garebeg Mulud* as *Perayaan Tradisional Sekaten 2005* (Traditional Celebration).



Figure 35

Gunungan at Masjid Agung. The *keraton's gunungan* under tight 'security'.



Figure 36
Rush for *gunungan*.
Masses of people rushing to get a share of the *gunungan* at the end of the ritual. It is believed that parts of the *gunungan* will bring blessings. While it takes days to make a *gunungan*, it becomes barren in a matter of seconds.

In the past, it was during the *Garebeg Mulud* that the *keraton* claimed its share of harvest and collected taxes from the people. The Sekaten fair was meant not only to attract the people from the *desa* (village), but also to provide entertainment to those who came to pay their taxes. Dillistone (1986:36) would consider *Garebeg Mulud* as a symbolic form of sacrifice in which farmers in hierarchical agrarian society would pay tributes to their rulers in exchange for “divine blessings producing fertility in their crops”. Today, there would be no such exchange, but the act of bestowing “blessings” continued.

In another perspective, attracting crowds to visit the fair would ensure that vendors who paid rent for the stalls would have adequate customers. Hence, in exchange for patronising these stalls, the people would gain 'divine blessing' from bits of the *gunungan* which they could obtain.

Tingalan Dalem Jumenengan (September 2005)⁴⁴

Tingalan Dalem Jumenengan commemorated the Susuhunan's accession to the throne. This annual event was preceded by several other ceremonies in which the Susuhunan bestowed honour and recognition to *sentono dalem*, *abdidalem* and other individuals. Titles, medals and awards would be conferred in these smaller ceremonies held days and weeks before the *Tingalan Dalem Jumenengan*.

The recipients of honorary titles would also receive their corresponding names that befit their contribution to the *keraton* and their own personality. While these honorary titles brought honour and status to the conferred individual, they would now be obliged to attend the annual rituals whenever possible. Over the years, the conferment of titles on prominent members of the public like politicians, government officials and businessmen had increased the membership of the *Kerabat* (*keraton* family). In 1999, General Wiranto received the title of *Kangjeng Pangeran* (*Solopos*, 22 Aug 1999). Other

⁴⁴ No *Tingalan Jumenengan* was held in 2004 due to the death of PB-XII and the Jumenengan of PB-XIII. This was the first *Tingalan Jumenengan* for PB-XIII.

politicians who had received similar titles included Akbar Tanjung, Abdulrahman Wahid and Amien Rais (Ari, 2004:149). A number of foreigners had also received titles from the Susuhunan (*Ibid.*:135; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:20) and in September 2006, representatives from the Sekretariat Karaton Surakarta Malaysia based in Johor Bahru (Malaysia) received their titles. The *keraton* considered the conferment of titles as a way of expanding the *Kerabat* and recognising individuals who had rendered “valuable service” (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:19). The main purpose of this ritual would be the congregation of all the *sentono dalem*, *abdidalem* and *Kerabat*, especially those who had recently been conferred titles, medals and awards. Guests included foreign dignitaries and high ranking public officials.

The ritual began with the formation of the Guard-of-Honour contingents at the ‘parade square’ of the Pelataran courtyard – the open space in front of the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko (Fig. 38). When the contingent was formed, the Susuhunan emerged from the Sasono Parasdyo and made his way to the west end of the Pendopo Ageng where his throne and the royal regalia (*Ampilan Dalem*) would be placed (Fig. 39). When he was seated, permission was sought for the *Bedhaya Ketawang* to be performed. The ritual usually culminated with the performance of the sacred *bedhaya* and those present were expected to meditate with the Susuhunan as the performance took place (Fig. 40). Prior to the *Tingalan Jumenengan*, these *bedhaya* dancers rehearsed the dance for at least seven nights up to the eve of this ritual.



Figure 37

Sesajen for Tingalan Dalem Jumenengan. Preparation of the sajen for the performance of the sacred Bedhaya Ketawang. This group of ladies provide clues as to where the sajen will be placed and where to focus of every ritual will be.



Figure 38

The Guard-of-Honour contingent. The standard Guard-of-Honour taking their position, thereby signalling to those present that the ceremony will begin soon. Following the forming up of this parade, the sentono dalem and abdidalem will take their position and be seated at the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko.



Figure 39
Permission to begin ritual. The Susuhunan sits on his throne surrounded by the *Ampilan Dalem*.



Figure 40
The *Bedhaya Ketawang* performance begins. The dancers moved in so gracefully that one does not realise their presence until they have all entered the centre of the *Pendopo Ageng*.

For this first *Tingalan Jumenengan* for PB-XIII Hangabehi, the ritual was followed by a royal progress where the Susuhunan sat in the *pusaka* carriage – *Kyahi Garuda Kencono*. This horse-drawn carriage was made in Holland in 1859 (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:280-1) and have been consecrated as a *pusaka*. The royal progress was supposed to be held 11 September 2004 following the accession to the throne but was postponed due to security concerns.

INTERPRETING KERATON RITUALS

The *Pasamuan Ageng* have been the major rituals of the *keraton*. Of the eight rituals, I managed to observe four of them and the *Jumenengan* ceremony in 2004. For *Kirab Pusaka* and *Garebeg Mulud*, I ensured that I covered the rituals at least twice so that I could have a better assessment of the rituals and compensated for unique events or occurrences. As mentioned, *Tingalan Jumenengan* was not held in 2004, but the first one for PB-XIII Hangabehi was held in 2005. Other than these rituals and ceremonies, I have attended minor ones like the 100-days *wilujengan* ceremony commemorating the death of PB-XII; the launch of the book, *Karaton Surakarta*; and the *wilujengan* for the gamelan group in November 2005. I have missed the *Labuhan* rituals that commemorated the relationship between the *keraton* and the ‘unseen’ worlds

into the *Kerabat* (foreigners and locals), rituals like *Kirab Pusaka* and *Tingalan Jumenengan* would become a showcase of support from influential or prominent members of Indonesia and foreigners. In *Garebeg Mulud*, the crowd that filled the spaces of the *Sekaten* fair and the mosque was evidence of some form of connection with the villagers. Similarly, the crowd that gathered along the route of the *Kirab* procession provided the necessary audience for the display of the *keraton*'s arsenal of *pusaka*.

The protocols for each ritual reinforced hierarchy among the participants and showcased 'status' to the public. In all the rituals, participants and observers had to abide by some 'rules'. For example, in *Kirab Pusaka*, the crowd that lined the roads were warned against standing up too high on raised platforms (e.g. standing on top of vehicles). Those who were viewing from the second floor balcony were also instructed to sit or crouch into a 'low' posture. They should not be standing higher than the *pusaka*. Interestingly, everyone abide by this protocol and adhered to the instructions given by the *abdidalem*. In rituals such as *Kirab* and *Tingalan Jumenengan*, prominent members of Indonesian society who had received titles from the Susuhunan had to abide with similar protocols. Hence, it was equally interesting to see politicians paying homage to the Susuhunan (king) during these rituals. Other protocols that were established included the wearing of specific attire based on rank and the differentiated access to parts of the rituals.

While the *Kirab Pusaka* and *Tingalan Jumenengan* emphasized the 'status' of the elite in Indonesian society, the *Garebeg Mulud* emphasised the relationship between the Susuhunan with the people. However, both *Kirab* and *Garebeg* emphasised the notion that both the *kawula* (servant) and the *gusti* (master) have their own set of responsibilities and reciprocity; and that there would be a difference in status between them. Soemarsaid (1981) summarised the relationship between *kawula* and *gusti* as:

- (1) A close, personal relationship accompanied by feelings of mutual love and respect is perceived as the standard mode of social communication.
- (2) Fate determines man's place in society. Whether he will be born a servant or a master. A consequence is that man has no choice but to do his duty as is ordained by fate.
- (3) The ruler (and his officials), in terms of practical administrative policy, must care for his subjects as a parent cares for his children; thus the ruler assumes in fact an attitude of protective superiority, the ruled an attitude of acquiescent subservience.

(Soemarsaid, 1981:26)

The involvement of various *pusaka* in the rituals reinforced the Javanese idea of power and became a reminder that the *keraton* possessed a reservoir of mystical powers. The prevalent beliefs in the potency of the *pusaka* would be some form of evidence for the perpetuation of the Javanese idea of power. The perceived potency of the *pusaka* have been dependent on the idea that power has been 'concrete' and could be possessed by inanimate artefacts. When the Javanese idea of power cease to prevail, these *pusaka* would no longer be considered potent and the hierarchy and status attached to them would be lost. Considering that all these rituals rely on *pusaka* in

some form, they could not exist without the Javanese idea of power; and when these rituals were performed, they would then perpetuate the Javanese idea of power.

In practical terms, the scale of the ritual reflected the *keraton*'s capacity to mobilise resources and manage extensive logistics. It also showed that the *keraton* continued to possess planning and organisation capabilities. As shown in the three main rituals featured here, the scale was huge, involved at least a thousand participants and incurring substantial costs. The rituals were reported to have been neglected in the period following the Second World War up to the 1970s due to a lack of funds (Bram *et al.*, 2001, Pemberton, 1994). Hence, the ability to conduct the rituals meant that the *keraton* has both the financial and logistics means to do so. The features of the *keraton* rituals showed that the *keraton* possessed both abstract and concrete forms of power.

Based on the schematic I presented, it seemed that the motivation for the conduct of the *keraton* rituals were based on showcasing the sphere of influence of the *keraton* and the extent to which they could garner adequate manpower, financial and logistics support. In terms of manpower, the *keraton* continued to benefit from the services of the *abdidalem* that numbers about 500 in 1999 (Ari, 2004:128) who have been dedicated and committed to their work despite the relatively very low wages. In a discussion I had with an *abdidalem*, they received about Rp 200.000 a month (about S\$ 40) or lesser depending on

rank and job scope. As shown in the schematic, the rituals also provided the *keraton* a way to perpetuate their hierarchy and status; and the Javanese idea of power.

Like the *slametan* described by Beatty (1999), every participant would have their own motivations and meanings attached. Their presence has made them a part of the ritual, just as mine had. If I were to make a survey of the reasons for their attendance and participation, there would be as many reasons as there were people observing the rituals. Among them would always be people who still believed in the potency of such rituals – people who would collect the dung of *Kebo Bule*, the flowers ‘offered’ to the *pusaka*, and the water used to wash the *pusaka* – and those who have observed the rituals out of curiosity and for the spectacle.

To some extent, I have been intrigued with the volume of interest generated by these rituals. From the *Kirab* and *Garebeg*, the massive crowds alone attested to the volume of interest in these rituals. The annual ceremony to confer titles and awards leading to the *Tingalan Jumenengan* showed that members of Indonesian society would still be keen to accept such recognition and titles (Ari, 2004). In doing so, they became part of the *keraton* and enlarging its sphere of influence as well as increasing the number of people who would be obliged to participate and support the *keraton* rituals. It was the enthusiasm of the participants and observers at these rituals which have

motivated PB-XII to continue leading the *keraton*, despite all the challenges that he faced since his accession (Bram *et al.*, 2001:143-144).

Given the limitations, I was not able to substantially gauge how much the rituals made sense to the 'audiences' or the rest of Indonesia who received news of such events from newspapers and television. In evaluating the thesis that I have developed here, I have been only concerned with observable behaviour of those who were present at these rituals. In all the rituals, both participants and audiences showed some degree of 'solidarity' and appreciation for each other's role.

Other than these features of *keraton* rituals, the *slametan* have been fundamental aspects of the rituals which were seldom noted. The *wadah* (container) of the rituals might appear pre-Islamic, but the *isi* (contents) have been Islamic in the form of prayers recited in the *slametan*. The public and spectacular nature of the pre-Islamic *wadah* had obscured the Islamic *isi* of the rituals. Despite the Islamic *isi*, there would be elements in the rituals which could be considered as constituting acts which would go against the basic tenets of Islamic belief. However, in discussing these matters with some of the practitioners, they were either defensive or assertive that they had not transgressed such boundaries. To some of them, the fact that they could maintain their focus on Allah and nothing else despite the 'distractions' showed that they have been spiritually mature. For example, one of the

dancers for the *bedhaya* asserted that all her prayers, fasting and mediation have been directed to Allah and not to Ratu Kidul, although the dance was performed for the purpose of appeasing Ratu Kidul. Several Muslims in Singapore who visited an exhibition based on my thesis were intrigued with the manner in which Javanese were able to harmonise elements which appeared to be at odds with one another, especially with Islam. Some blatantly asserted that these rituals were “un-Islamic”, while others avoided discussion and classified these rituals as part of tradition and culture, separate from Islam. Perhaps the maintenance of pre-Islamic elements, which could be considered contradictory to Islam or even un-Islamic, in *keraton* rituals was intentional to epitomize one of the Javanese manifestations of ‘power’ – the ability to harmonise and balance diversity.

It appeared that the *Pasamuan Ageng* have become a platform for the *keraton* to consolidate its powers. Features of the *keraton* rituals – such as maintaining a sphere of influence; asserting hierarchy and status; and perpetuating the Javanese ideas of power – seemed to support that thesis. However, when we consider the Javanese idea of ritual and *pusaka*, the *keraton* would have to yield ‘power’ in order to ensure the efficacy of the *Pasamuan Ageng*. In the perspectives of those who conceptualised power as ‘concrete’, the *keraton* would have to possess the *wahyu* and *kesaktian* to conduct these rituals and direct the *pusaka* for benevolence. In another perspective, the *keraton* would have needed to wield adequate power of influence to gain

financial and logistics support for these expensive rituals; and possessed the leadership and authority to plan and organise them. The status of the *keraton* as 'cultural centre' provided an advantage as these rituals could be constituted as tourist attractions from which government funding might be attained. In spite of these motivations, Bram *et al.* (2001) reported that PB-XII felt adequately motivated to conduct the *Pasamuan Ageng* based on the enthusiasm displayed by both the participants and observers of the rituals. It seemed to me that the present leadership occupying the *keraton* were likely to have the same motivation.

HERITAGE

The Pusaka Of The Keraton

In the performance of the *Pasamuan Ageng*, the *pusaka* of the *keraton* played a fundamental role in establishing some sense of continuity with the past, providing a commemorative ambience and projecting a mystic aura of power. I have observed that reverence towards these *keraton* rituals continued to prevail in varying degrees amongst the participants and audiences. Such reverence existed for a variety of reasons and among them was the presence of the *pusaka*.

SCHEMATIC APPRECIATION OF PUSAKA

Based on the idea of *pusaka*, I have derived a schematic diagram which puts the various aspects of *pusaka* graphically (Fig. 42). Tangible aspects would be those that relate to practical applications which would be necessary for the existence of a *pusaka*. Intangible aspects would refer to the abstract knowledge about the *pusaka*. While this schematic would be based on the idea of *pusaka* prevailing in the *keraton*, it could be extended to the general understanding of *pusaka* as the idea of *pusaka* has been considered as an “indigenous form of cultural heritage preservation” (Kreps, 2005).

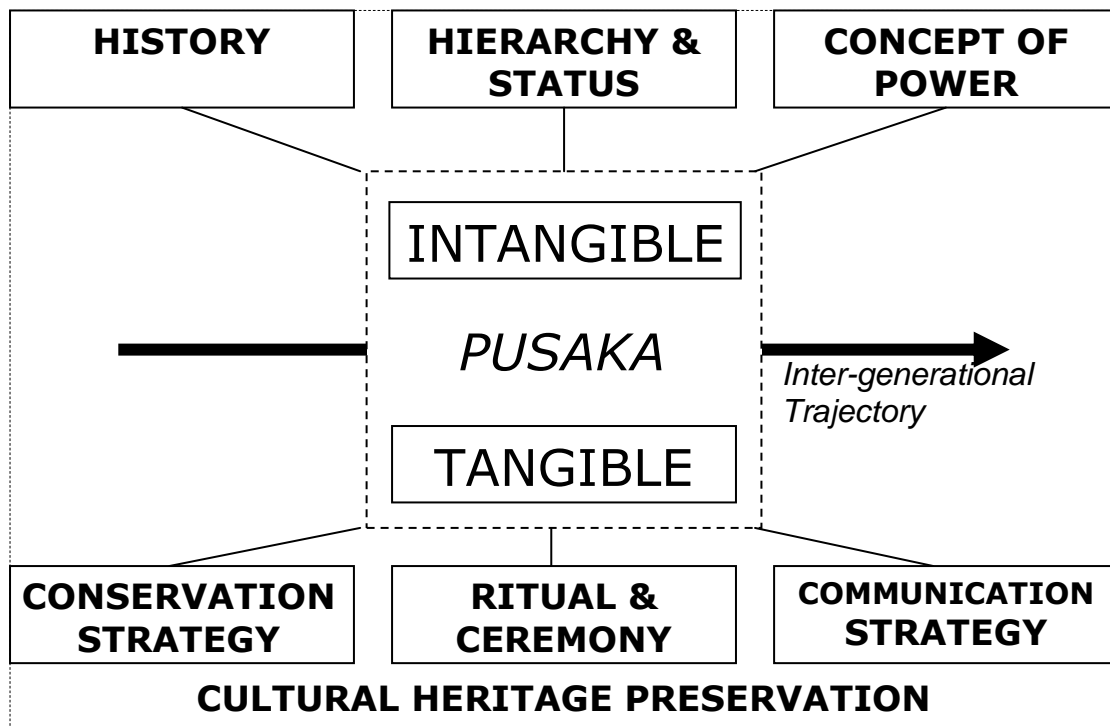


Figure 42
Framework for idea of *pusaka*.

There could be at least three intangible aspects to a *pusaka*. Usually a *pusaka* would have a history which supports its status as an object fit to be consecrated. As mentioned earlier, both antiquity and genealogy would have an effect on the ranking and perceived potency of the *pusaka*. This hierarchy or perception could only be ascertained with knowledge about the history of the *pusaka*. The access to the *pusaka* would co-relate with the hierarchy in the *keraton* and the status of an individual. Knowledge about the ranking of the *pusaka* would inform its corresponding caretakers their position in the *keraton* hierarchy as well as providing the basis for proper language to be used between them.

The concept of *pusaka* depicted here has had a strong relationship with the Javanese idea of power. *Pusaka* epitomised the idea that power has been 'concrete' and can be contained within a 'body'. Ownership of *pusaka* meant that an individual would have had a reservoir of power that could be used for both benevolent and malevolent intentions. The reverence towards *pusaka* would have implications with regards to the motivations and commitment of the *abdidalem* in caring for the *pusaka*.

In more practical terms, each *pusaka* would have to be preserved in specific ways and on specific days. Consequent to any entity being consecrated as '*pusaka*' would be a set of instructions pertaining to its care and preservation. A preservation strategy would involve the appropriate method for conservation, cleansing and handling. Hence, knowledge of this conservation strategy has to be maintained for as long as the *pusaka* existed.

Pusaka would have a strong presence in rituals and ceremonies which enhanced the aura of these events. Each *pusaka* would also have its own ceremony and ritual for appeasement. The method of appeasement tends to form part of the preservation strategy. This would be where the symbolisms inherent in Javanese cultural discourses would have to be employed to establish protocol, decorum and precedence – such as the way to show respect, the way to approach the object and the proper attire to be in. Such

knowledge, both theory and practical, would be reinforced each time the ritual was performed.

The fact that a *pusaka* has to be preserved for antiquity meant that knowledge surrounding them would be needed to be communicated from one generation to another, thereby preserving knowledge as well. The inter-generational communication came in the form of an effective succession plan which involved recruiting new members into the *abdidalem* group responsible for a particular *pusaka*; as well as in archival records at the Sasono Pustoko (library) in the eventuality that the various aspects of the *pusaka* have been documented.

Kreps (2005) affirmed that the idea of *pusaka* can be considered as “indigenous form of cultural heritage preservation”. The schematic I have presented here would be similar to her assertion that the idea of *pusaka* entailed the possession of knowledge on how to preserve ‘cultural property’ as well as the motivation to “transmit cultural knowledge from one generation to the next”. As I have mentioned earlier, the practices of those who believe in *pusaka* might be rationalised as pragmatic strategies for preservation, but their motivation was not preservation, but appeasement. Should their motivation be preservation, most of the *keraton*’s cultural objects would have endured the ravages of time and exposure to the environment. However, from my observations, it seemed that the motivation and priority for preservation has been reserved for *pusaka*, specifically the higher level

ones. One example that can be easily verified by any visitor to the *keraton* would be to compare the *pusaka* carriage, *Kyahi* Garuda Kencono to all other carriages. In another perspective, the best preserved cultural objects would not be those displayed in the *keraton*'s museums, but kept in the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso. Having made such a qualification, the *keraton*'s policy of prioritising care for their *pusaka* has been a pragmatic strategy considering the limited resources they possessed.

Nevertheless, I share Kreps' points that the idea of *pusaka* possessed effective strategies for the preservation of cultural objects. It has been based on this appreciation and belief that I have developed the schematic to make explicit, aspects of the *pusaka* which could contribute towards museological practice. In contrast, I am asserting that the sustainability of strategies would be dependent on the ritualisation of the preservation (more specifically appeasement) activities and the conduct of rituals in which these *pusaka* would be fundamentally a part of. Kreps (2005) had also noted the continued use of cultural objects in contemporary rituals as well as the appeasement of *pusaka* by way of placing offerings.

For the purpose of clarity, I would use the sacred dance – *Bedhaya Ketawang* – as an example of how the various aspects of this *pusaka* ensured its continuity since it was first created in the seventeenth century. However, in doing so, I am not implying that there were no innovations or changes in the dance. Brakel-Papenhuijzen's (1992:2) objective for writing her dissertation on

the *bedhaya* dances was based on her observation that “[t]heir [the *bedhaya* dances] sacredness made the dances so inaccessible to the general public that they were in serious danger of falling into oblivion since the kratons lost their political function”. She was concerned that the *bedhaya* would be lost and the same concern was expressed by Tirtaamidjaja (1967). I witnessed my first *Bedhaya Ketawang* performance in the late 1980s and it does not seem to differ from the performance I witnessed in 2004 and 2005. While I would not be able to confirm the continuity of the dance in terms of its choreography and other technical features, I could confirm that the *bedhaya* continued to be performed up to my last visits to the *keraton*.

The *Bedhaya Ketawang* has been a sacred dance performed specifically for the *Nata Jumenengan* (Accession to the Throne); the *Tingalan Jumenengan* (Accession Anniversary) and every Tuesday-*Kliwon*. While the performance during the *Nata Jumenengan* and *Tingalan Jumenengan* have audiences and participants who might meditate with the *Susuhunan* during the performance, the routine performance every Tuesday-*Kliwon* was not meant to have an audience. Every Tuesday-*Kliwon* the performance was meant to preserve the dance and ‘appease’ Ratu Kidul, as the dance commemorated the relationship between Ratu Kidul and the Mataram kings (including their descendents in Surakarta and Yogyakarta) (See Fig. 43). When the dance was performed, the performers and audience would be reminded of that relationship and the history of Mataram. The dance reinforced the lineage of

Surakarta with Mataram and the alliance between the seen and unseen worlds of man and *jinn* respectively.

The performance every Tuesday-*Kliwon* was not a rehearsal or practice. It has been the actual dance performed, but without the full complements of the costumes. The costumes of the *Bedhaya Ketawang* would be *pusaka* as well and possessed its own symbolisms. Technical training for the *bedhaya* would be held every Wednesday afternoons and Friday evenings. These dance practices would include the learning, training and rehearsals for other dances, such as the *srimpi* and other forms of *bedhaya*. Occasionally, the Yayasan Pawiyatan would stage the *srimpi* or *bedhaya* upon request and perform outside the *keraton*. In 2005, the Yayasan Pawiyatan was invited to the Netherlands to perform. In 2004, a television network from Europe requested for a demonstration of the dance for the purpose of making a documentary (See Fig. 40). As part of the full complements, the *sesajen* for the *bedhaya* was also prepared and displayed (See Fig. 51).

The dancers were usually young and not married as all dancers for the *Bedhaya Ketawang* have to be virgins and not menstruating when performing the dance, with the exceptions for members of the *keraton*. I was informed that dancers need to fast and enter a meditative state in preparation for every performance. It was believed that Ratu Kidul might be present during any of the performances. Hence, the need to enter into a 'pure' and meditative state

to ensure that there would be no repercussion on the dancers should Ratu Kidul chose to be part of it.

In the past, the dancers were members of the *keraton*, but the lack of interest forced the recruitment of dancers from outside the *keraton*. This showed that the need to ensure the perpetuity of the dance has been more important than recruitment policies. The complete performance, which could last almost two hours, required a high level of commitment and dedication. As two of my daughters have been dancers as well, I could easily appreciate the hard work and commitment necessary for such a 'hobby'.



Figure 43
The *Bedhaya Ketawang* performance held every Tuesday-*Kliwon* at the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko. (2005)



Figure 44

Srimpi showcase. The dancers with the crew from the television network. On the far right is the *Lurah*, or Head, of the dance section in the *keraton*.

The case of the *Bedhaya* Ketawang has shown that the fundamentals of *pusaka* provided a good foundation for the preservation of cultural resources such dance, music (*pesindhen* and *gamelan*) and the necessary crafts of making the *bedhaya* costumes. Perhaps, it was the idea of *pusaka* which made the *keraton* a viable 'cultural centre', suited for the preservation of cultural resources and reinforced the importance of 'living' versus 'dead' artefacts.



Figure 45
The *sesajen* for a *bedhaya* performance. The *bekakak* effigy of a man and woman is in the foreground.

MAKING RITUALS POTENT – *PUSAKA* OF KERATON RITUALS

Suwati (1992:159) stated that “[s]everal of the most interesting ceremonies of the Javanese courts center on these *pusaka* objects”. Although rituals like (especially) *Kirab Pusaka* seemed to reflect this presumption, my analysis of the *Pasamuan Ageng* suggested that it has been otherwise. In the *Pasamuan Ageng*, the *pusaka* served and play a fundamental role in establishing some sense of continuity with the past, providing a commemorative ambience and projecting a mystical aura of power. These rituals would not be potent without these *pusaka*, but each ritual would have its own purpose in which the *pusaka* provided some form of potency. In this

perspective, the ceremonies described by Suwati (1992) were not centred on the *pusaka* but involved the *pusaka* in some ways so as to make the rituals more potent.

Kirab Pusaka



Figure 46
Mock-up of a *pusaka*
prepared for the *Kirab*
Pusaka at the exhibition
on "Ritual, Heritage and
Power".

The efficacy of *Kirab Pusaka* has been very dependent on the perpetuation of the belief that *keraton pusaka* have been the most sacred and possessed the power to protect. An important and fundamental aspect of this ritual would the capacity for *keraton pusaka* to project their protective powers beyond the walls of the *keraton* and encapsulating not only the pre-

independence domain of Surakarta, but the entire Indonesian polity (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:11). Hence, the *Kirab Pusaka* would be entirely about the potency of *pusaka* and in turn the potency of the *keraton*.

Oddly, throughout the ritual, no one would have any inkling as to whether the artefacts carried by the contingents were really the *keraton pusaka*. Most of the *pusaka* that left the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso would be covered in velvet, tied with strings of jasmine, carried under a parasol and led by an *abdidalem* carrying an incense burner (Fig. 46). Hence, it could be suggested that it was the velvet coverings, jasmine, incense and parasol which gave the *pusaka* its meaning beyond the *keraton* walls. Aligning the concept of *pusaka* as a social construct and contextual entity, there seemed to be a shift in the use of symbols when the *pusaka* leaves the *keraton* complex. Within the *keraton* complex, the meaning attached to a *pusaka* has been determined spatially and in terms of access. At the *keraton*, there are three possible areas where the *pusaka* could be kept. The first would be the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso. The second would obviously be the museum. The third seems to be a room beside the Sasono Pustoko. Outside the *keraton* complex, it appeared to employ symbols which signified sacredness and power. Hence, while it has been interesting to discuss the ideas of *pusaka*, it became apparent from *Kirab Pusaka* that the inquiry should be targeted towards unravelling the meaning and significance of velvet, jasmine, incense and parasol in Javanese society.



Figure 47
 Author carried a *pusaka* lance during the *Kirab* in the late 1980s.

In the exhibition based on this thesis, I prepared a mock-up of a *pusaka* ‘dressed up’ for participation in the *Kirab Pusaka*. I chose to have a ‘spear’ as it has been the most prominent and I carried a lance during the *Kirab Pusaka* of 1980s (See Fig. 47). In the mock-up, the only genuine artefact was the parasol. It was loaned from the *keraton* and used during the most recent *Kirab* (See Fig. 46). However, the velvet covering was made based on actual specifications in terms of dimensions and colour. The other parts like the jasmine and incense burner was bought from the market. Hence, in this mock-up the most sacred

would be the parasol, but the emphasis in the display would be the *pusaka* wrapped in velvet and adorned with jasmine.

To use meaningful symbols is to be human. The symbol might point to an object, an event, or a person in the world bounded by the five senses or it might point to another world and to its imagined contents.

(Dillistone, 1986:33)



Figure 48
Cleaning of Nyai Setomi in Bangsal Witono.

Garebeg Mulud

In *Garebeg Mulud*, the main *pusaka* would be the *Gamelan Sekaten* sets – *Kangjeng Kyahi Guntur Madu* and *Kangjeng Kyahi Guntur Sari*. Other *pusaka* involved were two characters – *Canthang Balung* – partly leading the procession of the *gunungan*; and *Nyai Setomi*, the *pusaka* cannon housed in Bangsal Witono. During the week of the *Garebeg Mulud*, *Nyai Setomi* would be washed and cleaned (Fig. 48). A number of people were seen queuing to get a

portion of the water used to wash the *pusaka*. As the public was not allowed to view or have access to it, *Nyai Setomi* has been housed in an enclosed hut, Bangsal Witono. During a recent visit in 2006, I realised that people have consulted the *pusaka* in the same manner that they visited graves of holy or significant individuals (Fig. 49).



Figure 49
Consultation at the hut of *Nyai Setomi*.

On 19 April 2005, I have had the opportunity to observe the preparation of the ‘offerings’ for the *pusaka* gamelan, *Gamelan Sekaten*. The food stuffs were packed into wooden boxes and consisted of a variety of dishes, including a soup (Fig. 50). The familiar part of this ‘offering’ was the bunch of bananas, arranged with other foodstuffs in the same manner as the ‘offering’ for my *slametan* held earlier that year in Yogyakarta. Later, I learnt

that this 'offering' was not of the *sesajen* type, but of the *wilujengan* (thanksgiving) meant for *slametan*. Whatever the classification, the ultimate aim seemed to be establishing some form of '*slamet*' (peace).



Figure 50
Wilujengan (thanksgiving) offerings being prepared for the *Gamelan Sekaten*.

In *Garebeg Mulud*, the fundamental *pusaka* would be the *Gamelan Sekaten* sets from which the popular name for *Garebeg Mulud* was derived – *Sekaten*. According to sources from the *keraton*, these *Gamelan Sekaten* sets have existed since the late Majapahit era (15th century). It was considered as among the most revered *pusaka*. It was reported that during the period in the early history of Mataram, Panembahan Senopati and his successor were faced with challenges in consolidating their power. Hence, both felt that they lacked the 'power' to play the *Gamelan Sekaten* sets (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:308-9).

This showed that some level of ‘power’ would be needed before a *pusaka* could be used and their ‘powers’ exercised. The fact that Sultan Agung had made it his concern to commission the making and consecration of *Gamelan Sekaten* showed the importance of the *pusaka* as a symbol of ‘power’ (*Ibid.*). The importance of the instruments was further emphasised when the set was split among the successors of Mataram – Surakarta and Yogyakarta. Keraton Surakarta maintained the ownership of *Kangjeng Kyahi Guntur Sari* and created *Kangjeng Kyahi Guntur Madu*.

In the context of Mataram, the gamelan sets when played were believed to represent two parts of the Islamic declaration of faith – that “there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Prophet (or Messenger)”. This declaration, known as the *Kalimat Syahadat*, has been the most basic indication of Muslim faith and has been constantly recited during prayers. It has been believed that reciting the *Kalimat* as the last word before dying would make a person become a Muslim and live in the hereafter as one. The first *pusaka* to be carried out every *Kirab* was said to be an inscription of the *Kalimat Syahadat*. While it was not mentioned that the *Kalimat Syahadat* would make the *pusaka* more potent, the prominent role of this verse suggested that it has been so.

From my observations, the *pusaka* did not appear to ‘increase’ the potency of *Garebeg Mulud*. The potency of the *Garebeg* seemed to be reliant on the *gunungan*, whose parts were considered blessed and highly sought-after. The fervent desire to obtain parts of the *gunungan* showed that belief in the

potency of the *gunungan* was prevalent. In 2005, I managed to get a piece of the rice cakes, but decided to donate it to a girl who reminded me of my daughter. The little girl became very happy to receive the rice cake. At that point, I began to wonder about how this little girl would be inculcated to believe in the potency of the *gunungan* and what stories would be told to her? While this might be the case on the surface, the *gunungan* – like the typical ‘offerings’ in a *slametan* – would be placed in the mosque compound while a similar *slametan* took place in the mosque. Like the food spread in a *slametan*, these *gunungan* ‘received’ blessings when prayers were recited. When we imagine that *pusaka* could emanate ‘power’, the constant playing of the *Gamelan Sekaten* which has been believed to represent the basic element of faith in Islam might have made the mosque compound more ‘potent’. Hence, when the *gunungan* were placed in this ‘power-enriched’ space, it became infused or probably consecrated with the blessings.

The fundamental role of the gamelan has made the gamelan sets and its orchestra worth preserving. In addition to the *Garebeg*, the gamelan orchestra has had the responsibility of supporting the performance of the *bedhaya* performances. Hence, while the *bedhaya* might seem to be prominent, the gamelan would be equally important as it played significant roles in a number of rituals.



Figure 51

Gamelan Sekaten at Masjid Agung. Part of the gamelan ensemble of the *Kyahi Guntur Madu*. The performers are preparing to play their gamelan.

Tingalan Dalem Jumenengan

The prominent *pusaka* for the *Tingalan Jumenengan* would be the *Bedhaya Ketawang*. The *Bedhaya Ketawang* has been the most challenging *pusaka* to preserve. It involved *pusaka* in various forms – the choreography, the costumes, and the gamelan sets. It involved several groups of people – the musicians, the singers, the dancers and those responsible for preparing the *sesajen*. It has to be performed every thirty-five days at the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko and the dance could last almost two hours. It has to be rehearsed seven nights consecutively before the full-dress performance during the *Tingalan Jumenengan*. The continuity of its performance was also

ensured despite the destruction of the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko. For about three years after the fire in 1985, the dance was performed at the Kedhaton area (Bram *et al.*, 2001:246).

Aside from the *bedhaya*, the other *pusaka* involved in the *Tingalan Jumenengan* would be the *Ampilan Dalem* – the royal regalia. Consisting four gold animal figurines – *Banyak*, *Dhalang*, *Sawung* and *Galing*; a shield; a spear; a sword; a staff; and two ceremonial *Lar Badhak* (peacock feathers fan), the *Ampilan Dalem* completed the ‘image’ of the Susuhunan when he sat on his throne (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:283,285).

Although the image of the Susuhunan appeared to be complete with the *Ampilan Dalem*, it has been the *bedhaya* which ensured the legitimate and authoritative image of the Susuhunan. The performance of the *bedhaya* during the *Tingalan Jumenengan* required the Susuhunan to be seated on his throne – thereby requiring the accompaniment of the *Ampilan Dalem* – for the duration of the dance which could last almost two hours. Without the need for the performance of the *bedhaya*, the *Tingalan Jumenengan* might not even take place during the periods when the *keraton* faced severe financial difficulties in the 1970s. When other dances were no longer practised during these periods, the *Bedhaya Ketawang* continued to be performed without fail every Tuesday-

Kliwon, thereby ensuring the readiness for its performance every *Tingalan Jumenengan*.⁴⁶

An important feature of *pusaka* has been the emphasis on its designation as heirloom, its personification and its potency. The significance of *pusaka* and the reverence towards its potency would be a good indicator that the Javanese idea of power as described by Anderson (1972) continued to prevail. Siegel (1986:35) noted that *pusaka* “are still considered by many to contain magical potency” when he observed the *Kirab Pusaka* in 1981. Pemberton (1994:162) made the same observation in the 1980s. I observed and learnt of the same sentiments during my fieldwork in 2004 and 2005. Hence, these observations could suggest that such an idea of power prevailed.

As the *pusaka* possessed by the *keraton* were considered the most sacred and potent, it implied that the *keraton* might have possessed the power to protect the people and its domain(s). Through the performance of the *Pasamuan Ageng* – which involved these *pusaka* – the *keraton* might have established its position as protector and patron of the people.

The collection of various types of *pusaka* ensured that relevant knowledge about as many aspects of the *keraton* could be preserved and communicated from one generation to another. As shown in the case of the

⁴⁶ At the Keraton, there are basically two types of dances- *srimpi* and *bedhaya*. The other *bedhaya* dances are *Bedhaya Pangkur*, *Bedhaya Ludiramadu* and *Bedhaya Lala*. (Bram *et al.*, 2001:151).

Gamelan Sekaten, it was not the artefact, but the type that mattered. Consequently, there were evidences for the creation and replication of *pusaka*. However, it has been fundamental that *pusaka* became an heirloom to be inherited by future generations. Hence, *pusaka* embodied the past, present and future as it linked the present to a past recreated; motivated the preservation of the past (as well as parts of the present) for the purpose of communication to future generations.

Having the future in mind, the idea of *pusaka* alone would be insufficient to ensure the effective preservation of cultural heritage. These *pusaka* need to be part of a ritual or ritualised activity that would be significant to the community in which they existed. *Keraton* rituals and *pusaka* has become part of Indonesia's national cultural heritage and the *keraton* has utilised their heritage sensibly to maintain their relevance and significance in contemporary Java. Even if the participants and audiences of the rituals had considered the *keraton* rituals as mere tourist attractions or cultural events, their interest and involvement would have provided some motivations for its continuity. However, there were grounds to suggest that *keraton pusaka* and rituals were being revered and that the Javanese idea of power continued to prevail.

POWER

The Viability To Be King

In one perspective, rituals such as the *Pasamuan Ageng* were performed to probably involve some form of power consolidation; maintenance of significance; and sustaining adequate degrees of relevance. In this perspective, these *keraton* rituals were meant to establish legitimacy, maintain the aura of authority and ensure efficacious leadership. In another perspective that involved the Javanese idea of power and *pusaka*, the Susuhunan (king) would need to possess some form of 'power' in order to conduct these rituals, and maintain the collection of *pusaka* which served as his respository of mystical powers. The aim of the *keraton* rituals in this perspective would be to ensure synchronisation between the micro- and macro-cosmos and the resulting peace and stability.

Given these two possible perspectives, what would be the viable circumstances for someone to be king – in this particular case, Pakubuwana XIII – and to make the necessary effort to contests for such a position? In discussing about the viability to be king, I have chosen to discuss about issues of legitimacy, authority and leadership.

IDEAS OF LEGITIMACY

The legitimacy of the king would be based on the perceived notion of his possession of the *wahyu* and his level of *kesaktian*.

Wahyu, in its original Arabic interpretation, would mean “revelation from God”. In other possible localised interpretations *wahyu* could also refer to “divine light” or “divine power” or “divine appointment” (Florida, 1992:23; Soemarsaid, 1981:56; Woodward, 1989). In a Javanese context, it meant the “divine guidance” which graced kingship (*wahyu kedhaton*), literary genius (*wahyu kapujanggan*) or knightly valour (*wahyu keprajuritan*) (Soemarsaid, 1981:56; Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:39). The Susuhunan’s *wahyu* would be reflected by his designation as *Senopati Ing Ngalogo* (Commander in Chief) and *Ngabdurahman Sayidin Panotogomo* (Leader of the Faith); and his relationship with the ‘unseen’ worlds at the four cardinal points.⁴⁷ The attainment of *wahyu* has become the pre-requisite for legitimacy and this condition would be reflected by the charisma and wisdom (*wicaksono*) of the king (Soemarsaid, 1981:41-44). In the three stages of spiritual development, *wicaksono* would be

⁴⁷ At the four cardinal points are the ‘unseen’ worlds of *Kangjeng Ratu Ayu Kencono* (Ratu Kidul) of the South Seas, *Kangjeng Ratu Kencono Wungu* of Mount Salak and *Kyahi Udononggo* of Dalephi in the South; *Kangjeng Ratu Sekar Kedhaton*, *Kyahi Spuaregol* and *Kyahi Sapujagad* of Mount Merapi in the West; *Kangjeng Ratu Bathari Koluwati* (Bathari Durga) of Krendowahono forest, *Pangeran Singosari* of Mount Kendeng and *Kyahi Proboyoso* in the North; and Majapahit’s *Kangjeng Sunan Lawu* and Surakarta’s *Sunan Lawu* of Mount Lawu in the East. (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:102-103). In Yogyakarta’s *Pajupat* design, the four cardinal points are represented by *Kangjeng Ratu Kidul* in the South, *Sang Hyang Pramoni* in the West, *Kangjeng Ratu Sekar Kedhaton* (equated with *Kyahi Sapujagad*) in the North and *Kangjeng Sunan Lawu* in the East. (Wisnu, 2002:6,60-62).

the highest aspiration above *hamiseso* (mastery) and *wareso* (power) (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:272).

As '*wahyu*' has been derived from Islamic belief, it would be useful to compare it with '*baraka*', which Geertz (1968:30,44) described as "supernatural power" manifested by "personal presence, force of character, moral vividness" and obtained through a miraculous event or ascribed by genealogy. The manner by which *baraka* was attained differentiated it from *wahyu*. While *baraka* could be ascribed or attained, one has to be endowed with *wahyu* or derive it from 'revelation'. It seemed that *baraka* has had more similarities with *kesaktian* than *wahyu*.⁴⁸

The 'possession of *sakti*' (*kesaktian*) could be compared to the possession of *ilmu* (esoteric knowledge) among the Sama of Southern Philippines. The *ilmu* that was sought by the *mulid* (student) has been perceived as "concrete". It would be necessary to differentiate the *ilmu* here from the usual interpretation of '*ilmu*' in the Malay or Indonesian language as "knowledge". In this idea of *ilmu* prevalent among the Sama of Southern Philippines, it could be possessed by anyone; it has no moral implications and differed in strength (Horvatic, 1994:815). It could be inherited, attained and bought, but its total quantity would be finite (*Ibid.*:815-6). Hence, this idea of *ilmu* among the Sama would be similar to the idea of *sakti* among Javanese.

⁴⁸ Compare with explanation of *sekti* in Geertz (1980:106-107). Here, *sekti* is equated with *mana*, *baraka*, *orenda*, *kramat* and charisma. Contrast the explanation in Skeats (1900) that *kramat* can be interpreted as 'sacred' or 'sanctity'.

Kesaktian might not guarantee the legitimacy to rule, but the belief that *kesaktian* could be accumulated and quantified meant that a hierarchy could be established, placing those with more *kesaktian* above others. When a hierarchy has been formed, the authority of the Susuhunan could be maintained. While this attribute of *kesaktian* has been recognised, very few observers mentioned the need to sustain and maintain a satisfactory level of *kesaktian*. Some of the ways in which the level of *kesaktian* could be maintained and sustain could be through ascetic practices and the conduct of rituals.

As explained by Anderson (1972), *kesaktian* would be “without moral implications”. *Kesaktian* can be attained by anyone who engaged in ascetic practices; and power in the form of *sakti* could be directed for moral or immoral purposes. *Pusaka* possessed *sakti*, not *wahyu*; but certain *pusaka* could only be controlled with someone who has been endowed with *wahyu*. For others, they would need to appease *pusaka* with ‘offerings’ so that the ‘temper’ of the *pusaka* could be contained. Hence, the presence of *wahyu*, which has moral implications, ensured that *kesaktian* within each *pusaka* would be directed towards moral purposes.

The comparison of *wahyu* and *sakti* with other ideas like *baraka* in Geertz’s (1968) Morocco and *ilmu* in Horvatic’s (1994) Southern Philippines showed that such conceptions about power existed beyond Java. In these societies or communities, the king’s or leader’s legitimacy to rule or lead and

the corresponding perception of their authority would be perceived in those terms or within such an idea of power. It might be explained as contributing to the idea of 'charisma' in leadership, but my earlier discussion on the idea of *pusaka* showed that such ideas could extend beyond ideas about leadership, legitimacy and authority.

PAST MODELS OF KINGSHIP

In trying to understand the viability of being king in contemporary Java, it would be useful to refer to models of kingship or statecraft which had existed in the past. In doing so, I have referred to Geertz's (1968) discussion on the three Doctrines; Soemarsaid (1981) on the "Cult of Glory"; and Moedjanto's (1987) interpretations of "*Keagunghinataraan*" (the Great Divineness). These models of kingship and statecraft from the past would show the importance of rituals and *pusaka* in providing a sense of legitimacy and authority of Javanese kings.

According to Geertz, the Javanese *negara* was a 'theatre state' built on three doctrines: (1) *The Doctrine of the Exemplary Centre*; (2) *The Doctrine of Graded Spirituality*; and (3) *The Doctrine of the Theatre State* (Geertz, 1968:36-39). The *Doctrine of the Exemplary Centre* rested on the idea that the king and his court reflected the "image of divine order" and the "paradigm of social order", in which everyone in the kingdom aspired towards. Hence, the *keraton* (with the king at the axis) would be the example of the "microcosmic

representation of macrocosmic form" – i.e. the "exemplary centre" (*Ibid*:36-37).⁴⁹ This doctrine with the king at the centre would be complemented by the *Doctrine of Graded Spirituality* which informs of the 'natural' inequality that resulted in the king being "the paramount sacred object" (*Ibid*:37) and therefore magnifying his charisma. The *Doctrine of Theatre State* would refer to the "concrete realisation" of the earlier two *Doctrines* by means of ritual life (*Ibid*:38). In this model, the king's legitimacy was based on being the 'exemplary centre'; maintaining his authority by establishing a 'graded spirituality'; and showcased his leadership through the conduct of rituals. However, Geertz claimed that this Javanese *theatre state* was challenged when Islam was introduced due to the growing number of people who could not be indoctrinated (Geertz, 1968:39).

Contrary to Geertz, elements of the *theatre state* continued to prevail in Islamic Mataram. In the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, the legitimacy of the Mataram kings "served another and far more important purpose in the realities of state-life" – the glorification of the king (Soemarsaid, 1981). The *Cult of Glory* supposedly solved the problems of maintaining the king's aura of authority as it comprised of (1) the possession of *kesaktian*; (2) the might and splendour of religious monuments; (3) the king's genealogical tree; (4) the relationship with the 'unseen' world; (5) the possession of *pusaka*; (6) a large

⁴⁹ Compare with Behrend's (1982) appreciation of the '*keraton*' as discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

population; (7) military might; and (8) material wealth. While some of these elements (1-5) ensured some form of subordination, the others (6-8) ensured reciprocal capability in protecting the *negara* and mobilising resources for the benefit of the people (Soemarsaid, 1981:52-74). Hence, the *keraton* continued to be an 'exemplary centre' and the king was still a "paramount sacred object", but its leadership was not solely based on the conduct of rituals. It required administrative and management responsibilities, as well as communication with the people.

In another interpretation, the Mataram kings had relied on the image of *Keagunghinataraan*, which stated that the consolidation of power would be dependent on (1) establishing the king's genealogical tree; (2) political centralisation; (3) greater control of subordinates (patron-client); (4) military might; (5) promotion of *keraton* culture which determined attire, protocol and language used; and (6) possession of *pusaka* (Moedjanto, 1987:85-90). Moedjanto (1987:90) considered the relationship with the 'unseen' worlds and *wahyu* as secondary conditions for *Keagunghinataraan*; but recognised that *keraton* rituals would be the manifestation of *Keagunghinataraan* (*Ibid.*:80).

The two models – Cult of Glory and *Keagunghinataraan* – suggested that the possession of *pusaka* would be fundamental. However, the importance of *pusaka* might not rest solely on its possession of *sakti*; as being heirlooms, they could be one of the means by which leadership positions could be legitimised and maintained over time (Lillios, 1999). According to Lillios (1999),

heirlooms served to sustain the 'ascribed', as opposed to the 'achieved' characteristics and status of individuals. Hence, status depended more on the acquisition of heirlooms which emphasised links to a perceived powerful ancestor, than on individual achievements. In this perspective, heirlooms also ensured that future generations would benefit from this 'accumulation' of legitimacy. As sacred heirlooms, *pusaka* not only represented the possession of some form of 'power', but it served to provide another legitimising purpose.

Koentjaraningrat (1980) had classified the Javanese ideas of 'power' into three categories (1) Charisma which comprised on 'proper descent', 'divine appointment' (cf. *wahyu*) and possessing both a sacred historical mission and *kesaktian*; (2) Authority which comprised of 'embodiment of norms and ideals', acquisition of legitimacy through ritual' and possessing sacred symbols (cf. *pusaka*); and (3) "Power in the restricted sense" which would be the ability to mobilise and organise physical strength. In describing the third category, Purwadi (2004), Bram *et al.* (2001) and Moedjanto (1987) had introduced the idea of *kerakyatan*.

In Table 1 below, I have attempted to consolidate the *Doctrines* of the *Negara*, *Cult of Glory* and *Keagunghinataraan* in terms of the three categories of 'power' – *wahyu*, *kesaktian* and *kerakyatan*. In all the interpretations presented, elements of each 'model' could be categorised in some ways as manifesting *wahyu*, *kesaktian* or *kerakyatan*. The categorisation was arbitrary and could be contested. Even so, the parts of each model could be somehow aligned to the

three categories of ‘power’ as Koentjaraningrat (1980) had suggested. Where one perspective would interpret military might to be a manifestation of *kesaktian* in terms of ‘naked power’ it could also be a ‘protection’ for the *rakyat* emphasising the responsibility of *memayu hayuning buwana* (keeping world peace) and showcasing *kerakyatan*.

	WAHYU	KESAKTIAN	KERAKYATAN
<i>Theatre State</i>	Doctrine of exemplary centre.	Doctrine of graded spirituality.	
	Doctrine of theatre state.		
<i>Cult of Glory</i>	Genealogy (<i>takdir</i>) Unseen World	<i>Kesaktian</i> <i>Pusaka</i> Military (expansion) Religious Monuments	Material Wealth Human Resource Military (protection)
<i>Keagungbinataraan</i>	Genealogy (<i>takdir</i>)	Political Centralisation Patron-Client <i>Pusaka</i> Military	Culture
Koentjaraningrat (1980)	Proper descent Divine appointment Sacred historical mission	<i>Kesaktian</i> Sacred symbols Mobilise physical strength	Norms and ideals Ritual Mobilise physical strength

Table 1
Comparison of the various models.

THE THIRD CATEGORY

A Sultan who inherits a Kraton, with all its traditions, apparatus, attributes and cultural symbols which have been formed in the course of a long history, is always linked with the question of leadership. This is because Javanese culture suggests that the factor of leadership plays a central role in bringing about change, and at the same time can make the leaders the exemplary centre for society.”

- HB-X (2003), Foreword, **Kraton**, p. vii.

HB-X emphasised the need for leaders to be the exemplary centre for society. In Javanese terms, a leader could be an exemplary centre by embodying the three categories of ‘power’ – *wahyu*, *kesaktian* and *kerakyatan*.

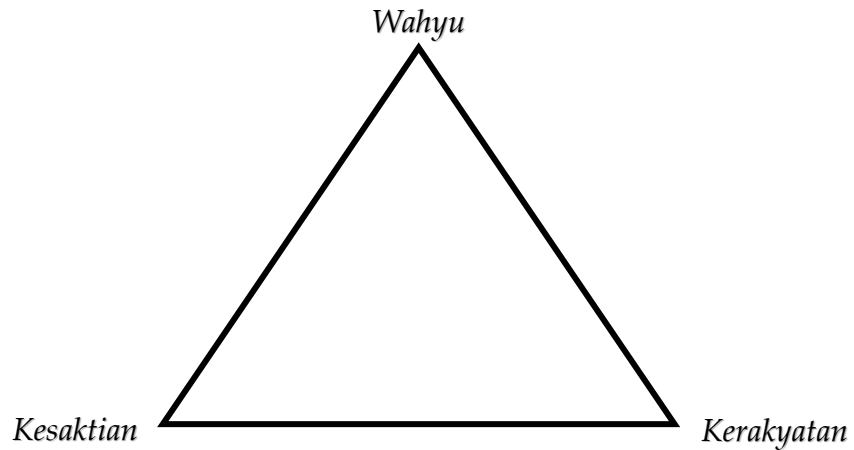


Figure 52
Javanese Ideas of Power

The idea of *kerakyatan* would be best exemplified in the concept of *kawula-gusti* (servant and master) which idealized that the Susuhunan and his *rakyat* should have a close and personal relationship; be interdependent; and establish a reciprocal relationship based on the Susuhunan as *pengayom* (protector) and *pengayem* (comforter or aegis) and the *rakyat* as subservient (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004:40-42; Soemarsaid, 1981). Although the idea about the concept of *kawula-gusti* as a social contract was considered by Ricklefs (1992:676, n.46) as “partly true” and “merely an ideological frosting” on some form of social contract which existed, it served as an ideal which kings should aspire towards. The fact that this concept was included as part of a contemporary *keraton* “manuscript” – Miksic & Heins (Ed.) (2004), *Karaton Surakarta* – showed that it continued to be an ideal to be realised by an exemplary centre.

In the *dodot* cloth of the *bedhaya* costume, the concept of *kawula-gusti* has been represented by a plant, which emphasised the relationship of the creator (*gusti*) as the nurturing ground from which the created (*kawula*) would grow like a plant. Considering that the plant motif appeared more frequently than others, it suggested an emphasis on the nurturing role of the Susuhunan. Hence, it would be appropriate that the performance of the sacred *bedhaya* dance would also remind the Susuhunan of his obligations to his people.

In the build-up to the *Jumenengan* (coronation ceremony) at the *keraton*, a number of activities were conducted for the people from 20 August 2004. Among these activities were complimentary medical check-ups, *ruwatan* (purification) rituals, *wayang kulit* (leather puppet) performances and visits to various homes. A similar showing of *kerakyatan* was ‘performed’ by PB-XIII Tedjowulan when he visited orphanages; and had his meals with the ‘*rakyat*’ – sitting on the floor with them. These acts were in support of his depiction as *Raja Rakyat*.

Purwadi (2004:6) asserted that the *negara*’s source of power was based on the “*raja sebagai orang berkuasa, rakyat sebagai pendukung negara, dan Tuhan Yang Maha Kuasa*” (the king as powerful, the people as the supporter and God, the Omnipotent). The “king as powerful” would be congruent to the king possessing *sakti* (*kesaktian*); the idea for God, the Omnipotent would be represented by the king being bestowed with *wahyu*; and the importance of people’s support could be understood as *kerakyatan*. Soemarsaid summed up

the importance of the idea of *kerakyatan* when he concluded his elaboration on the *Cult of Glory* with:

So display of magical power, physical might and material wealth formed an essential part, a necessary decoration, of kingship but only as the consequence of the king's inner magnanimity: the king's virtues is proven by his use of these abundant resources.
(Soemarsaid, 1981:73)

Among the *Pasamuan Ageng*, the *Garebeg* rituals espoused this characteristic of the *Susuhunan* despite the *Garebeg* being an affirmation of the *Susuhunan* as *Ngabdurahman Sayidin Panotogomo* (Leader of the Faith). The basis on which the *gunungan* was made and blessed with prayers at the mosque established the *Susuhunan* as the *gusti* (master) who would provide blessings to the *kawula* (servant). In *Kirab Pusaka*, the *Susuhunan* (*gusti*) extended the circumambulating route for *Kyahi Slamet* outside the *keraton* complex and used his *pusaka* to provide a protective 'shield' for the people (*kawula*) and ensuring cosmic harmony – thereby exercising *memayu hayuning buwana* (protecting world peace). In *Tingalan Jumenengan*, the performance of the *bedhaya* with the symbolic plant motifs on the costume which emphasized the importance of actualising the concept of *kawula-gusti* – the need to “care for his subjects as a parent cares for his children; thus the ruler assumes in fact an attitude of protective superiority, the ruled an attitude of acquiescent subservience” (Soemarsaid, 1981:26). The co-option of the elites during the *Tingalan Jumenengan* could also reflect the move to recruit these elites into

service of the *keraton*, for the benefit of the people (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004).

In the contemporary period, Moedjanto (1986:127) wrote about how HB-IX was a king who showed concern for the people and acknowledged HB-IX as “*Sultan Untuk Rakyat!*” (King for the People!). Bram *et al.* (2001) had a similar emphasis in showing how PB-XII had made decisions with the people at heart; and suggested that subsequent Susuhunan should meet 5 conditions: (1) vision for the future; (2) desired by the Kasunanan and the people; (3) received unanimous acknowledgement; (4) possess the necessary legitimacy; and (5) blessed by Allah (Bram *et al.*, 2001:317-318). When PB-XII was asked if he had seen any of these qualities in anyone, the reply was, “*Ada, saya sudah melihat tanda-tandanya. Tentang siapa dia, belum saatnya dibeberkan*” (Ibid: 320) (“Yes, I’ve seen the signs. About who the person is, it’s not the time to say so”). The five conditions set by the late PB-XII could be categorised into the three categories of ‘power’, with emphasis on *wahyu* (cf. condition (5) blessed by Allah) and *kerakyataan* (cf. conditions (2) and (3)).

The idea of *kerakyatan* would be similar to our understanding of ‘power’ as being “the ability to achieve a desired outcome” and “the ability to influence the behaviour of others”.⁵⁰ In the perspective presented by Purwadi (2004), Bram *et al.* (2001) and Moedjanto (1987), *kerakyatan* would be the ability to convince the *rakyat* that the Susuhunan continued to possess the *wahyu* and

⁵⁰ Compare with Heywood’s (2002:7) definition of power.

kesaktian; and this would be achieved through *dana* (beneficence) and the conduct of the *Pasamuan Ageng* infused with *pusaka*. The *rakyat* (people) would have to be convinced or they would either resist or revolt (Soemarsaid, 1981:74-82). *Kerakyatan* existed in 'Old Java' in the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, as well as in Surakarta and Yogyakarta under the reign of PB-XII and HB-IX in the twentieth century. Henceforth, would the three categories of power in the Javanese perspective – *wahyu*, *kesaktian* and *kerakyatan* – continue to form the basis of legitimacy, authority and leadership; and make it viable to be a king?

CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Contemporary ideas of leadership emphasised the importance of learning and how leaders should be an inspiration to its followers (Williams, 2006; Dourado and Blackburn, 2005; Owen *et al.*, 2004; Gunawan, 2001; Wiwoho, 2001). The manifestation of *wahyu* would be *wicaksono* (wisdom), which involved the application of knowledge and represented the culmination of learning. As an exemplary centre of knowledge and learning, the *keraton* possessed a vast repository of knowledge within its collection of manuscripts and other documents. One major contemporary contribution would be Miksic & Heins (Ed.) (2004), *Karaton Surakarta*, which has provided the necessary introduction to what the *keraton* has to offer. Secondly, the *keraton* appeared to be opening up its collection of once restricted *pusaka*

manuscripts following Yogyakarta's *keraton* collaborations with universities to study manuscripts like *Serat Surya Raja* and other *pusaka* manuscripts.⁵¹

Hierarchies are built on power: those at the top will have more power than those at the bottom... That does not mean that those in senior positions are expressing leadership.

(Owen *et al.*, 2004:17)

It seemed that when it came to leadership, hierarchy would not ensure good leadership. This view supported my suggestion that *kesaktian*, which results in a "graded spirituality" and hierarchy would not result in efficacious leadership. The sense of having been bestowed with *wahyu* and the inclinations toward *kerakyatan* would be the category of power which would shape the exercise of efficacious leadership – *wahyu* providing the moral compass while *kerakyatan* resembles an "affinitive" leadership (Owen *et al.*, 2004:168) which placed the need of followers as a priority; or epitomises the "law of reciprocity" (Dourado and Blackburn, 2005:37-38).

Become reliable... walk the talk. Endeavour to do what you say you are going to do.

(Owen *et al.*, 2004:154)

An important aspect of leadership would be the need for leaders to "walk the talk" and that "words must be reinforced by example" (Owen *et al.*, 2004:76). In Javanese, it has been known as *Sabda Pandhita Ratu tan kena wolak-walik* – the king should do what he says (Wiwoho, 2001:37; Suwardi, 2003:151.; Hariwijaya, 2004:70). Such consistency ensured the building of trust between the *Susuhunan* and the *rakyat*; and this trust building would ensure the

⁵¹ The author has been given in-principle approval to study manuscripts related to medicine and healing.

development of a close and personal relationship, interdependence and the establishment of a reciprocal relationship – i.e. the concept of *kawula-gusti*.

These examples would be some of the alignments made between Javanese and contemporary, global ideas of legitimacy, authority and leadership. One needs only to survey literature on leadership to make the alignment or criticism of Javanese ideas; or they could refer to Suwardi (2003), Hariwijaya (2004), Bram *et al* (2001) and Moedjanto (1987) to appreciate the contemporaneity of Javanese ideas. In reading such alignments it would also be important to separate contemporary re-interpretations from the earlier appreciation of ideas on legitimacy, authority and leadership.

THE VIABILITY TO BE KING

Pakubuwana XII was portrayed as a benevolent ruler who faced numerous challenges, suffered several disappointments and was reluctant to see the existence of the *keraton* beyond the fire on 1985 (Pemberton, 1994:187 Bram *et al.*, 2001:). When asked about his successor, he was reluctant to pinpoint the likely candidate and had avoided appointing a successor (Miksic & Heins (Ed.), 2004; Bram *et al.*, 2001). When his funeral procession moved from Surakarta to Imogiri in Yogyakarta, there were speculations about who would be the contenders for the throne. The first series of speculation centred on the choice between *Gusti* Hangabehi, the eldest son; and *Gusti* Dipokusumo, the promising son with two portfolios in the *keraton*. Later, the

contest was between *Gusti* Hangabehi and *Gusti* Tedjowulan (*Gusti* Dipokusumo's elder brother). While this could be seen as a rivalry between two half-brothers, it became a rivalry between two groups of siblings, each having their sponsors and supporters.

PBXIII Hangabehi	PBXIII Tedjowulan
1. Unsupported by the three Official Councils of the <i>keraton</i> and manipulated by siblings.	1. Supported by three Official Councils of the <i>keraton</i> .
2. Lacked leadership experience and capacity.	2. Possessed leadership experience as Colonel in the TNI (Army).
3. Lacked exemplary past and inappropriate role model.	3. Prestigious and exemplary past.
4. Health problems.	4. Healthy.
5. Ascended the throne under tight security.	5. Ascended the throne outside the <i>keraton</i> complex due to blockade by rivals.
6. Received suspicious will from an ailing PBXII and witnesses were siblings.	6. Considers PB-XII's will as a fabrication to legitimise <i>Gusti</i> Hangabehi's claims.
7. Claimed to have received the <i>wahyu</i> in a written account.	7. Claimed to be motivated by need to displace <i>Gusti</i> Hangabehi's group.
8. Refused to speak to press or the public. Instead, uses proxies to express opinions.	8. Willing to meet the press and speak openly. Visionary.

Table 2

Comparisons made by Jawapalace.org.

Jawapalace.org published a web page comparing the credentials of the two PB-XIIIs. From Table 2, it appeared as though PB-XIII Tedjowulan would be the most suitable Susuhunan and it would not be difficult to guess the partisan nature of such a site. Supposing that PB-XIII Tedjowulan should be the Susuhunan, I found it odd that after his accession, he had to 'report' to his superior (KR, 31 Aug 2004). It did not reflect much on his *Keagungbinataraan*

or independence as a Susuhunan. In an interview with the Tans TV crew that I accompanied, PB-XIII Tedjowulan was confident about his legitimacy, authority and leadership. As a military officer myself, I am more confident that PB-XIII Tedjowulan would make a better Susuhunan given his extensive leadership experience. At the time that he was contesting to be PB-XIII, it was rumoured that he was slated to be promoted to the rank of General, based on his earlier two postings to Aceh – a conflict area. As a military officer, he exuded an aura of authority and possessed the necessary leadership skills. However, military leadership would not be the same as leadership based on *kerakyatan*.⁵²

Given that the *keraton* has become a ‘cultural centre’ it would seem more appropriate for PB-XIII Hangabehi’s group to lead. His sister, *Gusti Mung* has been responsible for the revival of the Yayasan Pawiyatan in 1990 and she had served in the Indonesian Parliament for a term (1999-2004). Upon PB-XIII Hangabehi’s reign, I have observed that restoration works on the *keraton* complex have been more progressive and extensive. In my last visit, the Panggung Songgo Buwono has been restored and the *abdidalem* were busy working on some other projects inside the *keraton* complex. I was informed by the security personnel that the *abdidalem* was part of a routine

⁵² I know of this difference as I was concurrently a Board Member of a non-profit organisation when I was a Captain with the Singapore Armed Forces. As an officer, my leadership was the only factor open to scrutiny and evaluation. In the non-profit sector my legitimacy, authority and leadership are constantly being evaluated; and it was not easy exercising my leadership with the constant need to establish legitimacy and maintaining authority.

contribution from the *desa*. Due to limitations, I was not able to assess what these projects were. In terms of international recognition, PB-XIII Hangabehi has been acknowledged by members of the Sekretariat Keraton Surakarta Malaysia who received their titles from him in 2006; and he had graced the launch of *The Story of Centhini* in Singapore⁵³. Locally, the FKN V was hosted by the *keraton* led by HB-XIII Hangabehi; and more than a year's *Pasamuan Ageng* were conducted under his patronage. Given these 'signs' at the time that this thesis was written, it would be likely that PB-XIII Hangabehi could lead the *keraton*, but with the strong support from his siblings who have '*kesaktian*' in their own fields.

I have shown that there were opportunities to actualise some of the ideals of the exemplary centre. While it would be difficult to determine the possession of *wahyu* and *sakti*, symbolic representations such as the ability to conduct *keraton* rituals, manage the *keraton pusaka* and maintain some degree of influence over an extended royal family would be adequate to convince supporters and sympathisers of the *keraton*, the legitimacy and authority of the king.

The idealised concept of *kawula-gusti* and the corresponding idea of *kerakyatan* have been the primary focus of the contesting PB-XIII as each rival

⁵³ Soewito (2006), **The Story of Centhini** was launched in the Singapore Art Museum on 13 September 2006.

attempted to outdo the other in terms of being seen as “people-centred”. Such perceptions would be important in a democratic environment in contemporary Java and both contenders would need to show their capacity for leadership. Hence, in the attempts to be the exemplary centre, the *keraton* have shown possibilities for attaining the ideal through their conduct of *keraton* rituals, the use of *pusaka* and the outreach to the people.



Figure 53
Campaign banner of GPH Dipokusumo, a son of Pakubuwono XII, who was running to be the Deputy Mayor of Solo in June 2005.

The succession contest at Surakarta suggested that it would still be viable to be a king – in this case a Susuhunan. Observers and researchers of the aristocracies in Indonesia have reflected on trends which suggested a revival of these institutions. Politically, members of the *keraton* have offered themselves as candidates for political and administrative office. When they do

get elected to office, they provided the *keraton* and king some degree of political clout. Culturally, the *keraton* have become a cultural centre, providing some vestige of their cultural significance and entrenching their status as a national heritage. Economically, members of the *keraton* own businesses and the *keraton* could invest in developing office and retail spaces for rent. The three possibilities would make the *keraton* relevant and to some extent, being the exemplary centre would make it significant. In this sense, the *keraton* could be significant and relevant in contemporary Java.

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

*Say,
"I seek refuge in the Lord of Daybreak,
from the mischief of His creation;
from the mischief of the night when she spreads her darkness;
from the mischief of conjuring witches;
from the mischief of the envier,
when he envies."*

(Al-Falaq, Al-Quran: 113)

The four Quranic verses that I have included in this thesis are the main ones that I have been taught to know very well. These are the basic prayers recited during the *slametan* (or *wilunjengan*) in Singapore, Yogyakarta and at the *keraton*. The other prayers recited are based on the 'standard' book compiling a set of prayers known as *tahlil* and *Surah Yasin*. Usually the *tahlil* is the minimum set of prayers recited.

REFLECTION

Whither The Keraton Or A Risen Phoenix?

Physically, as a *wadah* (container), the *keraton* appeared to have been reborn like a phoenix from its ashes following the fire in 1985 which destroyed most of the buildings in the cosmological centre – the Pelataran Kedhaton and Dalem Probo Suyoso. Spiritually, as *isi* (contents), the accession of a new Susuhunan (i.e. new leadership) has brought forth the need to establish legitimacy and maintain authority, especially in a situation where there are two kings. While there were historical precedents for such a stalemate, the current situation varied greatly in two dimensions. Firstly, the reality of the *keraton* as a ‘cultural centre’ seems to be firmly established. Secondly, the manifestation of *kesaktian* would no longer be military might but probably economic and cultural ‘might’.

RITUAL, HERITAGE AND POWER

In this study of the *Pasamuan Ageng* and *pusaka* of Keraton Surakarta, the relationship between ritual, heritage and power has been investigated. In the first illuminating chapter on the *keraton*, I established the location where this relationship would be established. The *keraton* has been the *wadah* for the

conduct of rituals; the preservation of heritage; and the consolidation of power. As a *wadah* for rituals, the *keraton* has become a platform for the performance of *keraton* rituals which appeared to provide the opportunities for the Susuhunan and the Kasunanan to consolidate support and wield influence so as to remain significant and relevant in contemporary Java. However, when we consider the idealised motivations behind the conduct of the *keraton* rituals – such as maintaining *toto tentrem* – scepticism would be directed towards the hegemonic undertones of the rituals, especially when these rituals would be perpetuating the Javanese ideas of power. In Table 3, I have tabulated how each ritual could have perpetuated a particular category of ‘power’. At a glance, it showed the hegemonic undertones.

Ritual	Main Features	Ideas of Power
<i>Kirab Pusaka</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Night event. 2. Public exposure. 3. Exclusive participation. 4. Highly revered <i>pusaka</i> 5. <i>Slametan</i> 	<i>Kesaktian</i> <i>Kerakyatan</i>
<i>Garebeg Mulud</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Day event. 2. Public exposure. 3. Inclusive participation. 4. Main <i>pusaka</i>: Gamelan Sekaten; <i>Nyai Setomi</i> 5. <i>Slametan</i> 	<i>Wahyu</i> (Promoter of Islam) <i>Kerakyatan</i>
<i>Tingalan Dalem Jumenengan</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Day event. 2. Private event. 3. Exclusive participation. 4. Main <i>pusaka</i>: <i>Bedhaya Ketawang</i> and <i>Ampilan Dalem</i> 5. Conferrment of titles 	<i>Wahyu</i> (Relationship with unseen world) <i>Kesaktian</i>

Note: These would be simplified categorisation meant to illustrate relationship between ritual, heritage and power.

Table 3

Relationship between the *Pasamuan Ageng* and Ideas of Power.

The performance of the *Pasamuan Ageng* showed that the *keraton* has been able to preserve and promote the cultural resources that formed Javanese identity – such as attire, the arts and knowledge – as well as garner adequate financial and logistical support from various segments of society in Indonesia. The scale of the *Pasamuan Ageng* and the large public following showed that the *keraton* could still be significant and relevant to contemporary Javanese society. The large public following has had its economic effects in providing business for street vendors, hotels and other services which supported the large volume of participants and observers congregating at the *keraton* for the *Pasamuan Ageng*. It has been through *Kyahi Slamet* that the elite ritual of the *Kirab* had its strong connection to the agricultural foundations of the *keraton* and its links to the rural areas; and through the *Sekaten* fair that small-scale entrepreneurs and street vendors benefited from the business opportunity. Seen in this perspective, the *keraton* continued to be significant and relevant to contemporary Java.

The congregation of large crowds of audiences provided the necessary motivation for the continuity of such rituals. PB-XII was sufficiently motivated by such turnouts that he felt the *keraton* rituals should continue, and probably so did Suharto when he ‘instructed’ that the *keraton* rituals should continue despite the 1985 fire. With increasing interest in cultural tourism, the *keraton* could provide a ready annual itinerary that has been

promoted. However, there was very little evidence to suggest that tourism has been the main motivation.



Figure 54

Street vendors at the Kamandungan would reserve their positions by mid-day to prepare for the crowd that would gather from sunset till midnight to witness the exit of the *pusaka* from the *keraton*. Rituals such as the *Kirab Pusaka* provided income opportunities for these street vendors. In this respect, the *keraton* positioned itself as a supporter of the people's economy. (2005)

The heritage of the *keraton* – its *pusaka* – provided continuity from the past, motivation for the present and preservation for the future. *Pusaka* might be considered potent but it would be the contemporary evaluation of their potency which would determine their significance. Given that *keraton pusaka* has been considered as the “most sacred”, it was likely that people would continue to perceive them to possess high levels of *sakti*. Hence, the importance of *pusaka* would be derived from being an heirloom (connection with the past and future) as well as possessing *sakti* (connection with the present). Given that there have been adequate motivations to continue

conducting *keraton* rituals, the fundamental role of *pusaka* in these rituals would ensure that they continued to be significant.

The contemporary significance of *pusaka* would be a good indicator for the prevalence of the Javanese idea of power, specifically the belief in *kesaktian*. Being a social construct, the idea of *pusaka* would perish or be re-interpreted when the ideas of Javanese power no longer prevailed. This would be due to the fact that the idea of *pusaka* has been dependent on the notion that power has been 'concrete' and can be possessed by an artefact (tangible and intangible). The reverence towards the potency of the *keraton pusaka*; as well as confidence in the efficacy of the *keraton* rituals conducted to maintain *toto tentrem* (cosmic harmony) would be highly dependent on the ideas of power that the participants and audiences subscribed to.

Although the idea of *pusaka* has been a form of cultural heritage preservation, maintaining the idea of *pusaka* alone would be inadequate to ensure the preservation of Javanese cultural resources or property. From the examples I have shared in the preceding Chapters, the hierarchical nature of *pusaka* would ensure that only the highly esteemed ones would be better preserved. When the lack of funding threatened the Pawiyatan Kabudayan's existence, the *bedhaya ketawang* remained to be the priority in preservation. The idea of *pusaka* in the *keraton* provided a list of priorities which provided for better decision-making in the event that drastic measures need to be considered. The status of a *pusaka* would ensure its preservation with all the

necessary care, but its ultimate fate depended on its position in the hierarchy of *pusaka*; and it would be more guaranteed when it has a fundamental role in *keraton* rituals.

The prevailing ideas of *pusaka* and the *keraton* rituals ensured that Javanese cultural resources would be preserved, managed and promoted. This meant that the *keraton* has a fundamental role in preserving Javanese heritage. As heritage has been an important aspect of national identity, the *keraton* could become a partner in nation-building. This role of the *keraton* has been institutionalised by Kepres No. 23/88. Beyond ensuring the preservation of heritage, the *Pasamuan Ageng* also provided a showcase for the *pusaka*. Every *keraton* ritual would have its fundamental *pusaka*. Hence, the *Pasamuan Ageng* provided the opportunity for the *keraton* to show that it possessed these *pusaka* and has retained the necessary reservoir of mystical powers.

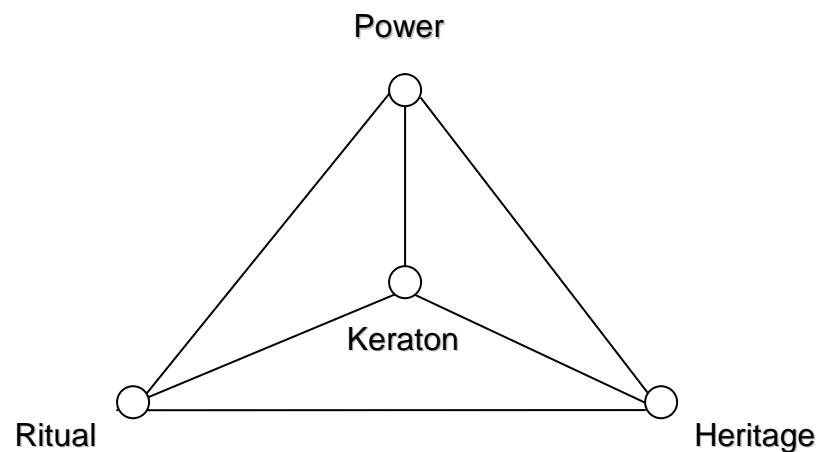


Figure 55
Triangular relationship between ritual, heritage and power.

Based on the explanation given so far, it would become clear that the Susuhunan and the *keraton* as the exemplary centre would rely on their ritual, heritage and power to remain relevant and significant in contemporary Java. (See Fig. 55)

I have shown that there could be two perspectives to view the relationship between ‘pomp’ and ‘power’. In one perspective, the purpose of consolidating ‘power’ would be for the benevolent goals of *memayu hayuning buwana* (protecting world peace) and ensuring *toto tentrem* (cosmic harmony) through the conduct of *keraton* rituals with the use of potent *pusaka*. Given that the *keraton* have made all attempts to revive and continue with some of their rituals despite difficulties, it showed the paramount importance of such rituals. Their motivation to consolidate their power through various means; and the notion that the *keraton* would have to possess some ‘power’ in order to use the *pusaka* reinforced the notion that ‘power’ served ‘pomp’ – recalling Geertz’s ‘Theatre State’.

In the other perspective, the *keraton* has shown that they have taken advantage of their status as a ‘cultural centre’; and the *keraton* rituals could be seen as showcases of elite status to be acquired by aspiring members of society. As a cultural centre, they have better justification to promote cultural heritage through the performance of *keraton* rituals which have been touted as “tourist attractions” and cultural events. Through the *keraton* rituals and

pusaka, they were able to exert their influence on the extended royal family (*kerabat*) by means of ritual protocols and hierarchical access to *pusaka*. In this perspective, it seemed that ‘pomp’ served the consolidation of ‘power’ – recalling Hobsbawm (1983) and Cannadine (1987).

The first perspective has been dependent on the Javanese idea of power and as I have suggested that such ideas prevailed, it would be very likely that Keraton Surakarta continued to espouse some features of the three Doctrines described by Geertz (1968) – “The Doctrine of the Exemplary Centre”, “The Doctrine of Graded Spirituality” and “Doctrine of Theatre State”. Hence, much of the arguments and findings have pointed towards supporting the idea that ‘power’ served ‘pomp’. However, it would still be difficult to ignore the hegemonic undertones of the *keraton* rituals and the supporting Javanese ideas of power and *pusaka*.

The idea that Keraton Surakarta could be a “theatre state” would become more prominent given that in contemporary Java, the king possessed no political power and unlikely to do so. Hence, their only motivation to continue with their rituals seemed to be for the purpose of remaining relevant and significant.



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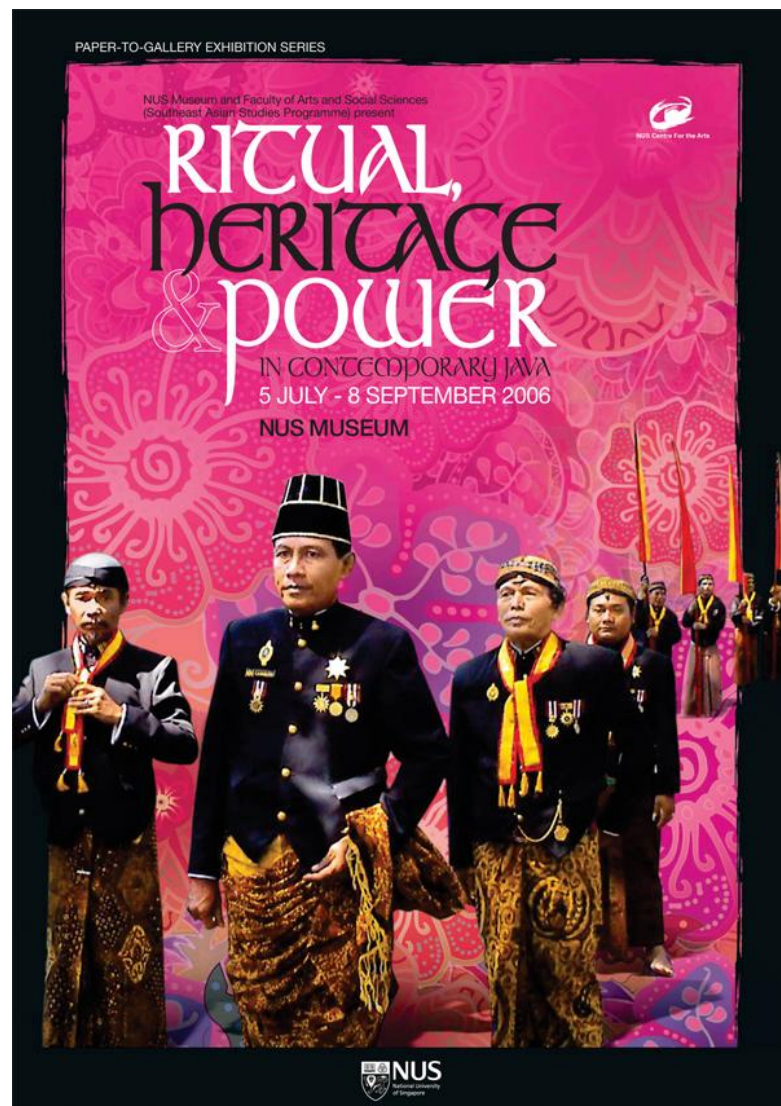
Royal Ark

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“RITUAL, HERITAGE AND POWER IN CONTEMPORARY JAVA”

The main ideas from this thesis were converted into an exhibition for the Paper-to-Gallery Series at the National University of Singapore Museum. This inaugural exhibition was held from 5 July to 22 September 2006. The exhibition was visited by members of the public and students from the secondary schools and tertiary institutions like the National Institute of Education.

The exhibition was relevant to the secondary school history lessons on the kingdoms of Southeast Asia; the issues of social hierarchy and stratification; and the effects of communication and trade.



Poster for the exhibition.



Section 1
Javanese calendar and sense of time.

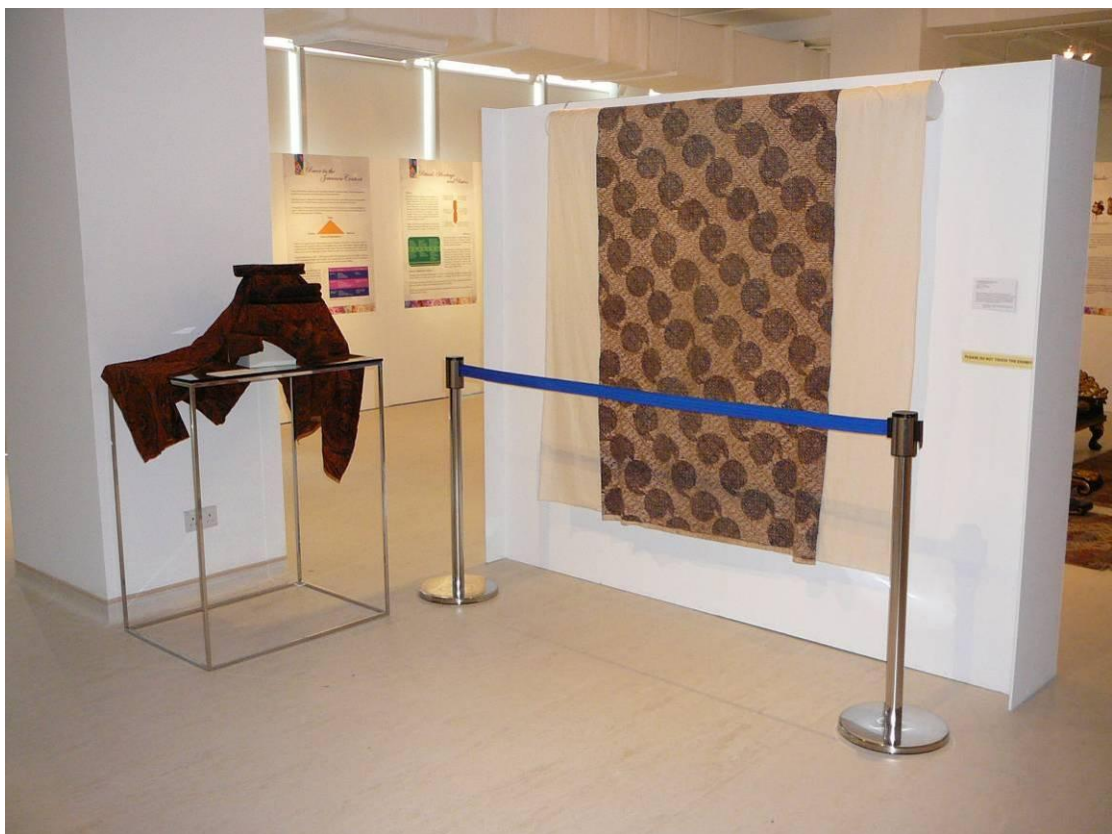


Section 4
Garebeg Mulud and the gunungan.



Centre Piece

Gamelan set on loan from the Southeast Asian Studies Programme, National University of Singapore.



Section 6a

Batik designs and social stratification.

NOTES ON *SLAMETAN* AND *SESAJEN* .

Slametan is a thanksgiving prayer session and communal feast that has been considered as the main religious ritual of the '*abangan*' category of Muslims in Java. While I am against such categorisation, there are elements in a *slametan* ritual which are supposedly of pre-Islamic origin- referring to beliefs and practices that precede the Islamisation of the Javanese. I prefer to use the term 'pre-Islamic' than 'Hindu-Buddhist', 'animist' or 'non-Islamic' as it is difficult to determine if the religious beliefs and practices can be considered as any one of these three alternatives. Using 'non-Islamic' presupposes that these beliefs and practices cannot be part of Islam.

Sesajen had been interpreted as 'offerings'. The equation of *sesajen* or the food prepared during a *slametan* or *kenduri* as 'offerings' tend to create discomfort among Muslims due to the affiliation of 'offerings' with animistic practices. In the literal sense, *sesajen* or the food spread are being 'offered' (hence, 'offering') but not in the same sense as the practice of offering food or items to deities or ancestral spirits.

In most cases, the food or items are being offered to be blessed by the aura of prayers or as symbolic acknowledgement of the thanksgiving prayers. Whether or not this understanding is the result of rationalising pre-Islamic practices in Islamic terms, the fact remains that there is a difference in how the 'offerings' is perceived. While my discussion here leans towards being defensive of my own beliefs, it reflects one probable reaction to the prevailing understanding of such 'offerings'. Nevertheless, I have to use the term 'offerings' for lack of a better word. In my case, the *sesajen* that I have is not meant to appease any *pusoko* or any spirits, but for the purpose of reminding me about aspects of life.

My *sesajen* includes items like seven threads of different colours; various types of beans; various types of spices; and one item each of wood and metal. It is also interesting to note that Dillistone (1986) considers gifts of food and drink as being part of agrarian society with the faith that their offerings will be reciprocated with blessings of sustained fertility and maturity.

In Singapore, the tradition of *slametan* has been preserved but became popularly known as *Majlis Doa Selamat* or *kenduri*. However, the format remains the same, with the preparation of food and the recitation and chanting of Quranic verses. In contrast to the tradition in Java, the spread of food is not considered 'offerings' and emphasis would be on the prayers. The aim of thanksgiving has been maintained and the giving out of *berkat* is prevalent. A popular trend will be the giving of honorariums to those who led the prayer sessions and non-relatives who participated.

GUNUNGAN



A completed *gunungan kakung*. Notice its conical shape and the distinctive decoration of green long beans and red chilli. The red and white cloth that adorns the base and the Indonesian flag denote some sense of patriotism. In the past, the *Garebeg* celebrations represent the Susuhunan's control of the outlying areas.

Gunungan are rice mounds decorated with colourful vegetables and rice cakes. These are offerings at all the *Garebeg* celebrations to symbolise the well-being of the kingdom.

The two main *gunungan* are the *gunungan kakung* or *gunungan lanang* (male *gunungan*) and the *gunungan putri* or *gunungan wadon* (female *gunungan*). In the *Garebeg*, this pair of male and female *gunungan* is accompanied by the *gunungan anak* (child rice mound).

The *gunungan kakung* is conical and almost like a mountain and made with rice cakes, salted eggs, red chilli and long beans at the fringes. The

gunungan putri has a rounder shape, almost like an 'umbrella' and decorated with large flat rice cakes and leaf-shaped rice cakes at the fringes.

Preparations for constructing the *gunungan* usually begin about two days before the procession. Firstly, the frames for the *gunungan* are constructed, followed by the preparations of the decorations. Then, the decorations made from rice cakes and vegetables are meticulously and tediously fixed on the frames.

As parts of the *gunungan*, specifically the decorations of vegetables and rice cakes, are believed to bring good blessings, they are sought after. Hence, the *gunungan* are heavily guarded when they reach the Great Mosque. However, the guards are no match for the swarming crowd when they rush to get a piece of the *gunungan*.



An *abdidalem* prepares the vegetables to be used as decorations for the *gunungan*. The types of vegetables used are those with contrasting colours to make the *gunungan* attractive.



Basic structure of a *gunungan putri*. The original symbolic significance of the *gunungan* can be traced to pre-Islamic traditions. In an Islamic re-interpretation, the *gunungan* symbolises the greatness of the Creator.



Close up of the decorations used for the *gunungan*. While the main decorations for the *gunungan kakung* are the vegetables, hardened rice cakes form the main decorations for the *gunungan putri*.



The day after the *Garebeg*, what remains of the *gunungan* are its frame and base. Some of them are broken but they will be repaired in time for the next *Garebeg*.

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NOTES ON HERITAGE MANAGEMENT IN THE KERATON

Most of the traditions and heritage of the keraton are preserved by the sustained annual frequency of the rituals. However, the bulk of the keraton's tangible and intangible heritage is managed by a museum, a library and cultural foundation.

At the Keraton, their *pusoko* are kept in three separate areas. The most sacred are kept at the Dalem Ageng Probo Suyoso, while the rest are either part of the museum collection or kept in a room beside the library – Sasono Pustoko. This room is filled with several spears, lances, muskets and artefacts which could easily be part of the museum collections. There was also a book-binding machine which has become some sort of a white elephant. The *abdidalem* in charge of the library shares with me that no one knows how to use the machine. However, when we shift the phrase 'white elephant' into a Javanese context, it could be a "sacred object". Other than being a store for these artefacts, the room serves as the office for the library.

Museum Kasunanan Surakarta

The Radya Pustaka Museum in Solo is one of the oldest museums in Indonesia and it was established during the reign of Paku Buwono X. However, this museum is no longer under the purview of the Keraton. Instead, the Keraton has its own museum, the Museum Keraton Surakarta Hadiningrat, which displays some of its *pusoko* for public viewing. The museum has a collection of artefacts ranging from its pre-Islamic inheritance of Hindu and Buddhist statuary; costumes; weaponry; carriages; and ceramics. As part of the museum tour, the visitor will also be allowed to enter the Pelataran area up to front of the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko. It is advisable to visit the museum in the mid-day of any Tuesday-*Kliwon* as the sacred *Bedhoyo Ketawang* will be performed at the Pendopo Ageng Sasono Sewoko.

The museum has been recently restored. There was no change to its galleries and collections. An interesting feature to appreciate is the diorama about the Diponagara War.



Entrance to the Museum. On the right is the ticketing counter while the left side serves as a lounge.



One of the newly renovated galleries. In the foreground on the right, there are miniature buildings showing the different types of roofs.

Sasono Pustoko

The keraton library is open to the public and students visit the library daily. I spent most of my time here, looking through the books in its collection. Already rich with manuscripts dating several centuries ago, the library continues to expand its collection which also includes several theses, academic exercises and reports on the keraton. It is fortunate that the Keraton continue to expand its collection.

Yayasan Pawiyatan Kabudayan Keraton Surakarta

The Yayasan Pawiyatan Kabudayan Keraton Surakarta, which was revived in 1990 manages the promotion and preservation of the Javanese language and performing arts- *karawitan* (music), *pakeliran* (wayang kulit/puppet theatre) and *bekso* (dance). It is through this foundation that the public can access the rich cultural resources of the keraton. They offer courses on music, theatre, dance and Javanese language.

In the case of Javanese language, the course has been contextualized to the role of the Master of Ceremony. Hence, students go through rigorous training on the application of proper protocols as well as the singing of Javanese poetry. In a training session I observed, students were mainly working adults who are mainly government employees and professionals. Although a small class, the enthusiasm and dedication displayed showed a continuing interest in the Javanese language as used in the keraton.